



CHARIVARIA

AMERICA this morning is in full preparedness, the State Department having briefed all organizing bodies on what to wear, eat, drink and say when entertaining the Queen. It was perhaps unwise to touch on artistic susceptibilities at the same time, and band leaders stung by the reminder that the British national anthem should be played "well or not at all" are not certain that they will stand for it.

Uneasy Head

M. PLEVEN's reluctance to form a Cabinet was not entirely due to a decent self-deprecation. As he has twice held the Premiership a third term might mean he had to keep it.

Adeste Fideles

WORSHIPPERS are being invited by the Vicar of Maldon, Essex, to bring



their pets to church. Sidesmen hope there will be no friction between dogs of different denominations.

One Jump Behind

THE planetarium for Madame Tussaud's has arrived, though Londoners will not be able to enjoy its representation of the heavens in motion until next year. To disparage this valuable educational aid would be invidious, but it seems a pity that it had to be made in Hamburg, that thirty-one had been supplied to other countries before we got ours, and that it reached the Surrey Commercial Docks just on the day when, judging from the front page headlines, it looked

as if it could never be quite sure that it wasn't short of something.

Nutshell

REPORTERS seeing Mr. Lennox-Boyd off on his tour of Uganda, Kenya,



Tanganyika and Zanzibar were rewarded for their trouble by a clear-eyed summing-up of difficulties ahead: "The problem in East Africa," said the Colonial Secretary, "is one of harmonizing the interests of all races."

Moon in the Morning

HOUSEWIVES resentful of the half-hourly news bulletins on the Light Programme have already begun writing isolated letters of complaint to the B.B.C. If next week's bulletins are anything like last's it is expected that this bleep-bleep-bleep will change to a continuous whine.

Small World

POLITICIANS from eight European countries ended a recent conference without having agreed on a "capital" for the European Federation. The



French representative is reported to favour Paris, the German Frankfurt and the Italian Milan, though Lord Layton, for Britain, seems to have put forward no nomination—perhaps because

of a fatalistic feeling that it will end up as Washington.

No Initiative

MORE and more manufacturers are protesting at the growing Japanese practice of attaching "Made in Britain" labels to their export goods, though a few are still wondering if they didn't miss a good market there for the labels.

Clear Round

IN the intervals of putting its price up, congratulating itself on being the best Sunday paper in Britain, and signing up such well-known journalists as Denis Compton and Stanley Matthews, the *Sunday Express* found



time to solve the problem of how to interest its readers in another contract celebrity specializing in a subject they weren't particularly interested in: Miss Pat Smythe's article was called "I Gave my Horse a Pint of Beer."

Her Day

MR. KHRUSHCHEV was said to have been "very outspoken" by Mrs. Roosevelt when they met at Yalta. By Mrs. Roosevelt?

Bright Side

LAST week when those Norwegians stoned

The wrong brass-hat, it must be owned

Both generals reaped some benefit For General Sugden gained a lot of Publicity he well might not 've

And General Speidel wasn't hit.



"This Damn Thing"

HERE I am at a full-dress Press Conference on the Russian Satellite, staged by the Royal Society. At this very minute the chunk of deep-dug, high-flung metal is chirruping helpfully through the ionosphere. How well the Royal Society does this kind of thing. The rooms are grand but comfortable. At the end of the lecture-room the platform rises in tiers as



in some nonconformist chapels. The lowest tier is a lab bench. I can imagine soirées with rows of men in decorations and their ladies, in feathers and glittering, reliable jewels, filling the leather seats while in a courtly way a man of enormous distinction unbends and does experiments at the bench. There is a blackboard, a screen and a globe that gets criticized for being insufficiently tilted.

Behind me against the back wall is a row of photographers and cameramen. If I jump on my chair shall I be on the B.B.C. or I.T.A. or a newsreel? I might even get into an archive. After all, this is rather an historic occasion. The press are very solid and intelligent in appearance—many large, grizzled men, probably retired scientists signed up by the classy papers as Our Special Correspondent; most important that Top People should know some simple science for everyday conversation. Some are puzzling, highly articulate young men, too young to be retired scientists, perhaps expert correspondents from rival branches of scientific journalism—physiology, for example. Here and there soured men are looking at watches. For them this is the sixth press conference of the day: why can't they summarize the story and let everybody beat it to

the 'phone? A bearded man next to me shows strong dislike of the proceedings. He mutters, but I cannot catch the drift of his disgust: either a man with a deadline to meet or a flat-earther. Another man helpfully and deprecatingly quotes yesterday's *Pravda*. The front rows are full of scientific swells ready to help the press. Some of them must have been working day and night ever since the news broke; but they think it worth while to come long distances to ensure that the public gets it in proportion.

This kind of meeting is newish, not as new as the satellite, of course, but pretty new and not much less important. Once science was an aristocratic preserve as far as consumption went. A peer and his crew, bored with a gaming-house, would feel a whim for some natural philosophy and fall in with fellow members of the Royal Society and watch an experiment or two. One does not immediately think of science among the typical aristocratic occupations of to-day, though there might be a place for the pleasures of the home chemistry set (large size) among the attraction of stately homes. Then science became something doled out by experts to the serious-minded poor as an encouragement to industry and as a



[After the Bayeux Tapestry]

specific against atheism and greed. When Professor Haggai Jones lectured the Depressed Operatives' Mutual Improvement Brotherhood at the Mechanics' Institute on *The Wonders of the Planets* he was revealing a corner of a treasure, not appealing for recruits or reporting to sponsors. After this came a stage when science became a completely enclosed world. The scientist was screened by his formulæ from the impertinences of the vulgar as the classicist was by the dead languages. Let in the mob and you let in passion, prejudice and inability to use a slide-rule like a gentleman.

This afternoon the experts want to make sure we realize that, though the Russians did not give any warning and rather boyishly rushed to get priority on launching instead of waiting till everybody knew what to look for and when, this is only a pilot satellite. The speakers are very careful to point out just how the Russians could have been more co-operative and just how they have really been quite good. Even unwarned our lads have learned quite a bit. The Ministry of Supply team say the satellite is not much military help, careful not to add to us or to them. They emphasize that their being in on things is not a sinister sign. The Astronomer-Royal and his predecessor turn up. There are B.B.C. engineers. There are radar experts. There are radio-telescope men.

Questions are respectful. This audience would be much tougher with the Chancellor of the Exchequer or Billy Graham. We get pretty technical. I try to restore the broad, general approach, which is the only one I can understand, by asking what more information the Russians would have given if they had come completely clean. The chairman praises my question. The answers are a bit cautious but boil down to the lowering fact that really the Russians have not kept very much back.

Mr. Alan Ivimey shall be commended; while other questioners refer to "The satellite" he firmly calls it "This damn thing," and speaks for the side of us all that would like to stay cosily with less knowledge and less fear.

How eupeptic and sensible and gay scientists look in the flesh. Now that the future of the human race depends on the public's preferring to be ruled by the sane rather than the insane, I hope the atmosphere in Russia is the same.

R. G. G. PRICE

Tell Me if it Hurts

A letter to a women's magazine describes a visit to a dentist's surgery where soft music is relayed to soothe patients.

SHOULD my infant son be destined as a dentist
To earn his living later from the State,
The indentures that he ventures
Into in the world of dentures
Must *not* be handed to him on a plate.

He will study all the older anæsthetics,
And not rely on music to distract
The emotions of his patients
From the painful operations
That, with proper analgesics, he'll enact.

My son must learn his job the hard way, spurning
This soft and modern antidote to pain:
I will see that he's apprenticed
To an irredentist dentist
And returns to either ether or cocaine.

ANTHONY BRODE

I LIKE IT HERE

by Kingsley Amis

Garnet Bowen, writer, is taking his wife Barbara and children to Portugal, partly for a holiday and partly to make an inquiry for Bennie Hyman, publisher. Hyman's firm want to find out whether a manuscript called "One Word More" which they have received from Portugal is genuinely the work of Wulfstan Strether, author of "This Rough Magic" and other novels, who is rumoured to have died.

[This version is condensed from Mr. Amis's forthcoming novel].

"DAD."

"Yes?"

"How big's the boat that's taking us to Portugal?"

"I don't know really. Pretty big, I should think."

"As big as a killer whale?"

"What? Oh yes, easily."

"As big as a blue whale?"

"Yes, of course, as big as any kind of whale."

"Bigger?"

"Yes, much bigger."

"How much bigger?"

"Never you mind how much bigger. Just bigger is all I can tell you. Isn't there a comic there you can read?"

"I don't want to read, I want to chat, Dad."

"Oh, God."

"Dad."

"Yes?"

"If two tigers jumped on a blue whale, could they kill it?"

"Ah, but that couldn't happen, you see. If the whale was in the sea the tigers would drown straight away, and if the whale was . . ."

"But supposing they did jump on the whale?"

" . . . on land it would die very soon anyway, I think I'm right in saying. Or perhaps it'd be dead already. Yes, I think it'd have to be, to be on land. Anyway, it couldn't happen."

"But supposing it did?"

"Oh, God. Well, I suppose the tigers'd kill the whale eventually, but it'd take a long time."

"How long would it take one tiger?"

"Even longer. Now I'm not answering any more questions about whales or tigers."

"Dad."

"Oh, what is it now, David?"

"If two sea-serpents . . ."

Bowen now forbade his elder son all speech under penalty

of physical mutilation. A waiver in cases of imminent emergency was petitioned for and allowed, but only because all five Bowens were travelling by car at the time. Barbara drove it with concentration and skill, even with a certain dash punctiliously making with the hand-signals, giving buses right of way, tooting a warning to just the kind of child who might suddenly dash across the road. She also drove in complete silence.

In a much longer time than it takes to tell the Bowens had got to Southampton, found the right dock after two or three tours of that part of the county, waited long enough there for both boys to ask almost continuously to be taken back to South Kensington and for Sandra to fall off a bench on to her face, gone on board and been directed to their cabin.

In their cabin they found Bennie Hyman, surrounded by

their luggage and drinking a large gin and tonic. Before speaking he pressed the bell at his side. Then he greeted them heartily. Barbara responded less heartily but still fairly heartily. Bowen was delighted but a little suspicious at the same time. He said "Hell, it's good of you to come all this way, Bennie. What is it, seventy miles?"

"Not quite—I was week-ending with some people in Winchester, so I thought I might as well pop down and see you safely away on the billow. I got a glimpse of you on the dock but I thought I couldn't do any good there, especially not for myself, so I argued my way along here and drank. Everything gone off all right?"

"Yes, thanks to you, boy."

"Ah—" He glanced over at Barbara, who was opening some telegrams, and continued: "Nonsense, chumbo. A pleasure. I can tell you're wondering why I'm really here. He pressed the bell again. "Brought you one or two things which I'll give you while I can still remember. Letter of introduction to old Buckmaster—that's what we call the old man of mystery in the office, tired of going on about the chap who says he's Strether all the time, too much of a rignarole."

"Why Buckmaster?"

"That was me, actually. Just a name I happened to spot once on one of those corset shops, you know the kind of thing. I thought it was ruddy funny. Ah, here we are. Things always turn up in the end if you wait long enough. Now what are we all going to have? Barbara?"

While drinks were ordered Bowen read the telegrams



There was a Greetings one and an ordinary one. The ordinary one said: HAVEG OOD TRIP DEADLINE WAUGH PIECE NINTH AT LATEST SEND AIRMAIL REGARDS STOP HEWSON. The Greetings one said: ALL MY LOVE GOE SWITH YOU MY FARLINGS SEND ALL NEWS AND KEEP PHOTOGRAPHAL BUM TO SHOW ON RETURN BON VOYAGE STOP MOTHER. There is a God, Bowen thought. He broke into violent coughing while Barbara watched him suspiciously. "Mother" was of course her mother. She was called Mrs. Knowles.

Hyman said: "And here's a proof of *One Word More*. If you let it out of your possession I'll swing on your—I'll be very cross with you. Oh, yes: I've brought you a copy of *This Rough Magic* as well, in case you feel like a spot of analysis and comparison."

Bowen made faces to try and shut Hyman up. Barbara knew about Strether now, but only as a writer they might visit. Just then she went round the corner of the cabin into the long corridor-like bit that ended at the wash-basin and porthole. She carried a wet nappy.

Hyman was going on: "They should leak it to the papers, just say a new Strether's on the way. It'd flush the real bloke if he's still alive. But Weinstein won't play. Gone into a sort of nervous decline. Can't blame him. It's his can if we publish a smelly one."

Barbara reappeared. Bowen hoped he was in the clear. Just then an over-amplified voice bawled an instruction about passports. This was followed, with slightly brutal relish he thought, by some business about *os senhores e as senhoras os passageiros*. Already, Bowen said to himself. A few minutes later Hyman asked to go up on deck, where he said there might be some more air. There proved to be a great deal more, all of it moving fast and very cold. Barbara had stayed in the cabin to see to the children, each of whom Hyman presented with some money. He had hung about for a moment as if assessing whether or not to kiss Barbara, but had just said good-bye after all.

Hyman reappeared for an instant on the dock, made signs of farewell and then ran out of sight again at a great rate. Bowen thought enviously of the other's leisurely drive back to beautiful London.

When the boat put in at Cherbourg Bowen was sitting in the lounge, drunkenly trying to read *This Rough Magic*. He had got to page 188, by which time it seemed that the author had gone some way towards finding out what initial situation he proposed to deal with.

Bowen yawned. Barbara and the children had been in bed for quite a time. The thought of that cabin, with luggage and children's effects filling such space as was unoccupied by the bunks and Sandra's cot, decided him to get a bit tired and drunker before joining them.

He glanced up to find a man watching him. This man was small, elderly and ferocious-looking. He said in a hoarse, American-accented voice: "You British?"

"Yes."

"Thought so. Mind if I sit here?"

"Not in the least. Would you like a drink?"

"Thank you, in a little while. We just got on board."

"Oh yes? On holiday?"

"Well, I don't know as you could call it a holiday exactly. We're never going there again, I do know that."

"You mean to France?"

"Sure, France, that's what I mean, France. You know France?"

"Not well, no."

The American leaned closer and began talking rapidly and with few variations of pitch. "Madeira where we're going is bad enough in all conscience, but by God you almost begin to appreciate a place like that when you get up in this part of the world. There's only one thing they're interested in hereabouts and that's your money. Gimme, gimme, gimme, that's their theme song. I thought the Spaniards were on top in that league, but by God these French have certainly got 'em whipped. Ah, the whole country's falling to pieces, it just can't hold up much longer. Not that they don't deserve it; hell, they deserve it all right."

Bowen was conscious of feeling slightly nettled. If the French were going to be knocked, he felt, he would do the knocking himself, and on ground of his own choosing, on literature or politics, where it didn't matter. "How do you make that out?"

"I'm telling you, young fellow. But then let me tell you France isn't alone in falling to pieces, no indeed, it's very far from alone in that. You show me one country that isn't falling to pieces, that's all I ask. You'll find it tough, I'm warning you, because I've seen more of the world than you. I was employed in the United States Consular Service and my duties took me to a dozen places in both hemispheres and I never want to see any of them again. I've been retired nearly twelve years now and do you know what we've been doing since then? We've been touring the world—but literally touring the world—looking for some place where we could stand it. We tried South America: nothing but squalor and greed and corruption and . . . and sheer horror. We lasted three days in Australia, just three days: dirt and drunkenness and stink everywhere." He broke off to light a long thin cigar and to cough.

"What about the States? Surely there must be . . ."

"Have you ever been to the States, young fellow? Have you seen Americans in their natural habitat? Then let me tell you that they're the most ignorant, vulgar, immoral,



godless, materialist, greedy, avaricious, small-minded people on the whole face of this earth. And I ought to know. Life in America to-day is sheer . . . unmitigated . . . hell. Only satisfaction is it can't last much longer. It's on the way out. Finished. Doomed. You're British, aren't you? Then have a drink. Have one with me. You could use one. You may not feel you could, but by God you could. You . . . certainly . . . could. If you're British as you say, then, boy, could . . . you . . . use . . . a drink."

British or not, Bowen could, and felt he could too. His companion pressed the bell for a minute or so, looking frequently over his shoulder to make sure Bowen had not stirred. Without consultation he ordered two large scotches. Then he said: "The world to-day is inhabited by a race of sub-men. I'm beginning to see there's only one thing to be done about it. Cut yourself off from it. Fast. While there's still time. And I think I've found the place."

"Outer Mongolia?"

"Certainly not. In England, oddly enough. The British are the laziest people on the whole face of this earth, but by God you almost begin to appreciate it when it's gimme, gimme, gimme everywhere else. You know Gloucestershire?"

"Well, I know where it is."

"You do?" The American sounded sceptical. "There's a little place called Lydney in Gloucestershire. There's a house near there I can get if I want it. It's away off on its own."

Bowen put on an intent, earnest look. "Let's see, now . . . Lydney . . . No, I don't think I should advise Lydney."

"You know it? You want water?"

"Yes please, up to the top . . . No, it's too near Wales. Why, it can't be more than ten miles or so from Monmouth."

"So what?"

"Well, I suppose I'll have to tell you . . . Have you ever heard of the Welsh Nationalist Party?"

"No, I haven't. What of it?"

Bowen took his time lighting one of his Dutch cigars. "The Welsh Nationalist Party," he said, gesturing, "is a revolutionary party. So far there hasn't been very much activity out in the open—a bit of sabotage here and there, a police station raided, a few R.A.F. airfields destroyed, nothing more than that. The English authorities know pretty well who's responsible, but they can't do anything about it. No

Welsh witness would testify against them, and even if they did there'd be no convictions. Welsh juries and Welsh judges, you see. I say, I hope I'm not boring you with all this."

"Just keep talking."

"They're not strong numerically at the moment. They're in control of the press and radio and education and local government and the Church, but their actual numbers are small so far."

"What do they want, what are they after, these . . . Welsh Nationalists?"

"An independent Welsh state. And they mean to get it. Of course I've been exaggerating, really. No doubt you'd be perfectly safe in Lydney. I should say it's most unlikely there'd be any border raids or anything of that kind. Most unlikely."

"These Nationalists. 'They Reds?'"

"Some of them, probably. A bit of Communist backing you know."

The American drew in his breath sharply and sat for a few moments staring at the tips of his little pointed shoes. Bowen repented: he didn't want to spoil Lydney for him, nor in particular for his wife. He was on the point of urging the other to check up on the Welsh Nationalist story before taking any kind of decision, when he squared his shoulders and faced Bowen.

"See here, young fellow. I don't know whether you've been trying to scare me, but if so you've been wasting your time. From now on I'm taking this Lydney idea a sight more seriously. And I'd like to say this. If any goddam Reds come snooping around my place, there's nothing I'd like better. I've always wanted a chance to get at those Commie bastards and this looks like it. Mm-hm. Well, thanks for the talk. It's been most interesting." He banged his glass down, nodded once, and marched out.

Bowen felt less elated than he had a few minutes earlier, but he also felt a good deal tired and drunker than when the American first appeared. Beddie-byes, then. The floor throbbed unpleasantly when he got to his feet, but he soon recollected he was on a boat, where engines were to be expected. With *This Rough Magic* under his arm he made his way downstairs.

Soon Bowen was aloft and lowering to the floor a series of objects that ended with all the life-jackets, stowed on his bunk for convenience. Immediately he had put the light out Barbara said in her clear treble: "What exactly was Bennie Hyman being so mysterious about this morning?"

In Bowen's mind alarm-bells began clanging, whistles blew, gun muzzles swung skywards, fighter pilots sprinted across the tarmac. "Oh, it's just that they're keeping quiet about Strether's new book for the time being."

"Sssh, talk quietly . . . Why?"

"Oh, they're not satisfied with it or something."

"You didn't say anything to me about that."

He said emphatically: "Well, we can't really talk about it now."

"All right. Good night."

He heard her thrashing about with pillow and bed-clothes, plunging over from one side to the other, settling down with a groan.

(To be continued next week)



Roy Nixon

THE TRAFFIC PROBLEM



Introductory

DURING an average day in 1956 127,749,326 miles of English road were used by 2,938,764·8 cars; statistically speaking, that is. And at each new Motor Show it becomes more apparent how great an advantage the car-maker has over the road-maker. It is his ability to build his cars in *one place* that tells.

Each Motor Show, therefore, brings out a gleaming series of new plans for coping with the resulting traffic problem. They vary; most are dully concerned with building a dead straight twelve-lane highway from Dover to Glasgow or widening the corner by Hedge Bottom; but all have one thing in common: they will be obsolete by the time they are put into practice.

The *Punch* Survey has been made with this in mind. Five of our six proposals are, as it were, two jumps ahead of present needs, while the remaining one is designed to bridge the gap with an efficient use of available material. This more sophisticated approach has its dangers; it is possible to allow it to become cranky. The proposal for expendable cars, which the business-man could drive to town in and then put a match to, is, for instance, attractive; it might relieve a lot of congestion in the metropolis and would certainly prove popular with manufacturers, but it does not allow for the problem of getting the business-man home.

Another danger is that of smugness. Some of these proposals will bring their own problems. The repairs of the clover-leaf overleaf should already be exercising the minds of a policy committee at the Ministry of Transport. Is there to be a small gang continuously at work on it, or will the whole thing be closed for repair for two months every three years?

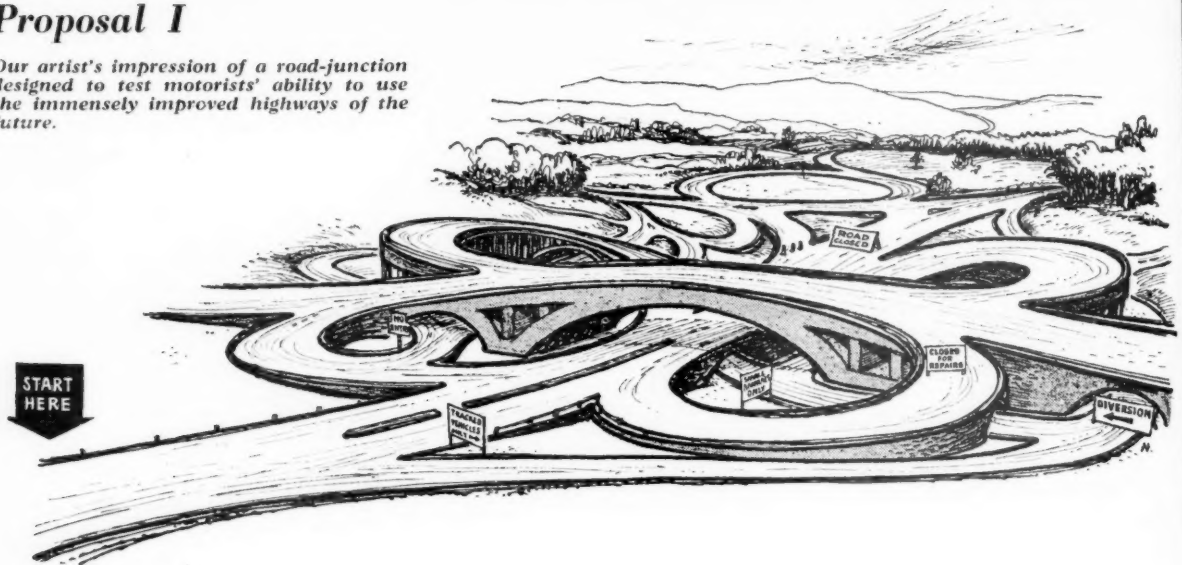
Yet another snare is that of confusing efficiency with safety. There is no denying that many people feel deeply about road safety and their feelings should, as far as is compatible with economy, be respected. But that does not mean that we must adopt without question proposals such as that for the introduction of a shorter mile. The fact that it would allow a higher "safe" speed is alluring, but it will have to be shown that the lower statistical density of traffic will compensate for the immensely increased mileage of bad road in the country.

There are many points on which we have not touched. Some are minor, such as the suggestion that every motorist needs psychiatric attention as often as his tyre-pressures need checking, and this service ought to be provided free at garages; that seems to us a matter for the petrol companies. Other points, though important, are too controversial to be profitably discussed. Who is going to arbitrate between those who believe that much shorter cars would allow more traffic on a given stretch of road and those who point out that much longer cars enable drivers to sit in a pocket of clean air between the fumes from exhaust pipes, with important results to the health of the country?

Finally, our proposals are urgent. If the Ministry is going to pursue its traditional policy of procrastination there will be no time to put them into practice before Man learns to move himself about by thought transference.

Proposal I

Our artist's impression of a road-junction designed to test motorists' ability to use the immensely improved highways of the future.



Proposal II

Before any lasting solution can be achieved it may be necessary to devise interim measures. These should make use of the material most readily available, which seems likely to consist of ex-Army personnel. A specimen Order follows.

Ex-"A" Coy. No. 1 Ex-R.A.S.C. Depot
Part 1 Orders

OPERATION EXPEDITER

1. Ex-Personnel as detailed will parade at the Northern extremity of London Bridge, outside Fishmongers Hall, at 0730 hrs. Operational area will extend south to the junction of Southwark, Borough High and Tooley Streets. "B" and "C" Coy. will support to the North and South respectively.

2. Objective: Free flow of traffic across the Bridge at all times.

3. Necessary ex-transport, e.g. ex-trucks and ex-carriers to be indented for by ex-O.C. Tanks, L.C.T.s, etc., will only be released on the authority of ex-C.R.A.S.C.

PROCEDURE

4. All private motorists will be stopped and interrogated. Those unable to give reasons for not utilizing public transport will be:

- (a) turned back
- (b) arrested
- (c) winched off the road
- (d) shot

according to their degree of obstinacy, abusiveness or self-satisfaction.

4A. Para. 4 shall not apply to private motorists of rank of Bank Director or above.

5. Congestion arising from excessive accumulations of Public Transport Vehicles will be relieved by diverting into

- (a) Billingsgate to the north
- (b) Borough vegetable market to the south
- (c) Other streets or places within the purview of "B" and "C" Coys.

6. At the ex-O.C.'s discretion ex-personnel will return compliments paid by

- (a) bus crews
- (b) taxi drivers
- (c) fish porters.

Thrown fish and crustaceans or parts of crustaceans will not be returned but laid out neatly in order of size.

7. Old men wheeling barrows at 3 m.p.h. or less at the head of traffic streams will be placed in open arrest, and their barrows requisitioned for the removal of casualties under 4(d) above.

8. Horse-drawn vehicles in the following categories will be arrested and conducted into Fish Hill or Pudding Lane:

- (a) British Railways vans
- (b) Brewery advertisements driven by old extroverts in cockaded hats.

8A. As a precaution against disturbances due to outraged public feeling, ostentatious care will be exercised in the handling of horses over 15 yrs. of age. For the benefit of personnel unable to reckon the age of a horse, Queen's Regulations, Sec. XIII, para. 1378, gives guidance as under:

- (i) "The age of a horse or mule will be reckoned from April 1st in the year of foaling."

8B. Horses observed to be wind-suckers, crib-biters or weavers should be tethered at the foot of the Monument, and the Senior Veterinary Officer or Remount Officer of British Railways or the concerned Brewery contacted.

9. In the event of outward (or home-going) traffic getting under way before inward (or work-going) traffic has been cleared, the O.C. will favour the heavier stream, even if this means instructing the lighter to travel in reverse gears and in the opposite direction to that desired. Earlier consultation

The Traffic Problem

with the appropriate flanking Coy. is neither necessary nor desirable.

10. Foot-passengers unable to proceed in either direction due to such obstruction on the footways as may be caused by omnibuses, milk-tankers, horses, gun-carriers or representatives of the Civil Power will, at the discretion of the ex-O.C., be recommended to

- (a) jump from barge to barge
- (b) swim for it
- (c) get in touch by letter with the Port of London authority.

11. Except in extreme emergency temporary (e.g. Bailey) bridges will not be thrown over the river.

POWERS

12. Queen's Regulations, Sec. XIII, para. 1179, lays down as follows:

- (i) "If it becomes necessary to fire, officers and soldiers have a serious duty which they must perform with coolness and steadiness."
- (ii) The ex-O.C. will not implement this Regulation

without prior consultation with the Judge Advocate General.

13A. A reading of the Riot Act may at some stage be thought advisable, since any person remaining for one hour after the reading is guilty of felony and liable to penal servitude for life.

13B. Should such reading be decided upon, the ex-O.C. will request a Magistrate to undertake it, except as provided in 13B (i) below:

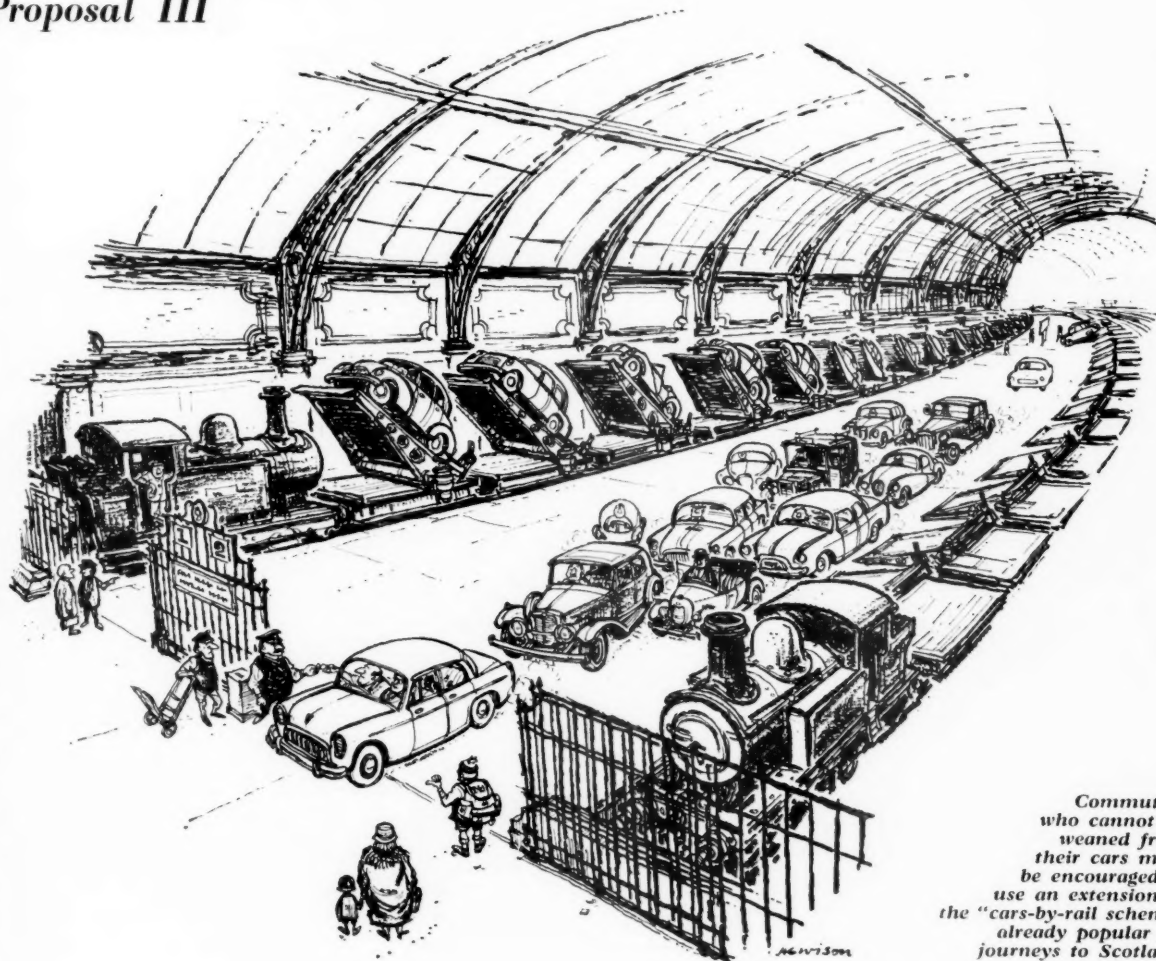
- (i) The ex-O.C. may read the Act if he happens to be a Magistrate.

APPLICATIONS FOR POSTING

14. On completion of tour of duty, ex-personnel may expect sympathetic consideration of requests for posting as mineworkers, nuclear fission laboratory assistants, experimental space-flight passengers or anything else to make a nice change.

Lt.-Col.
Ex-D.D.S.T.

for ex-G.O.C.-in-C., Maj. Gen.

Proposal III

Commuters who cannot be weaned from their cars must be encouraged to use an extension of the "cars-by-rail scheme" already popular for journeys to Scotland.

Proposal IV

Speedier cars may be the answer to overcrowded highways. The faster the car, the sooner it vacates road space for others. With this in mind, RUSSELL BROCKBANK and J. B. BOOTHROYD recently took out a Jaguar XK "SS" and a flattering amount of short-term life insurance.

Jaguar XK "SS"

Weight 17½ cwt.
250 b.h.p. at 6000 r.p.m.
Max. top speed 160 m.p.h.
Accel. 0-60, 4.7 secs., 0-80, 8 secs., 0-100, 12.1 sec.
Max. gear speeds, 1st 67, 2nd 78, 3rd 112, top 160.

RESIDENTS on the test route will not need telling that we followed the line Guildford-Winchester-Salisbury. They will remember us.

There is only one of these motor-cars in the country, the rest having run off the edge, got stuck under milk tankers, or gone to America, where longer, wider and straighter roads, with fewer tractors towing hay-wains in the middle of them, enable short bursts of maximum speed to be achieved until such time as the police can organize road-blocks ahead by short-wave. As no more are to be made we had the additional satisfaction of knowing that we were testing the fastest museum-piece in existence. The passenger, in particular, found such additional satisfaction welcome. He could do with some. His accommodation was grudging and limited, gouged out of the surrounding mass like a small hole

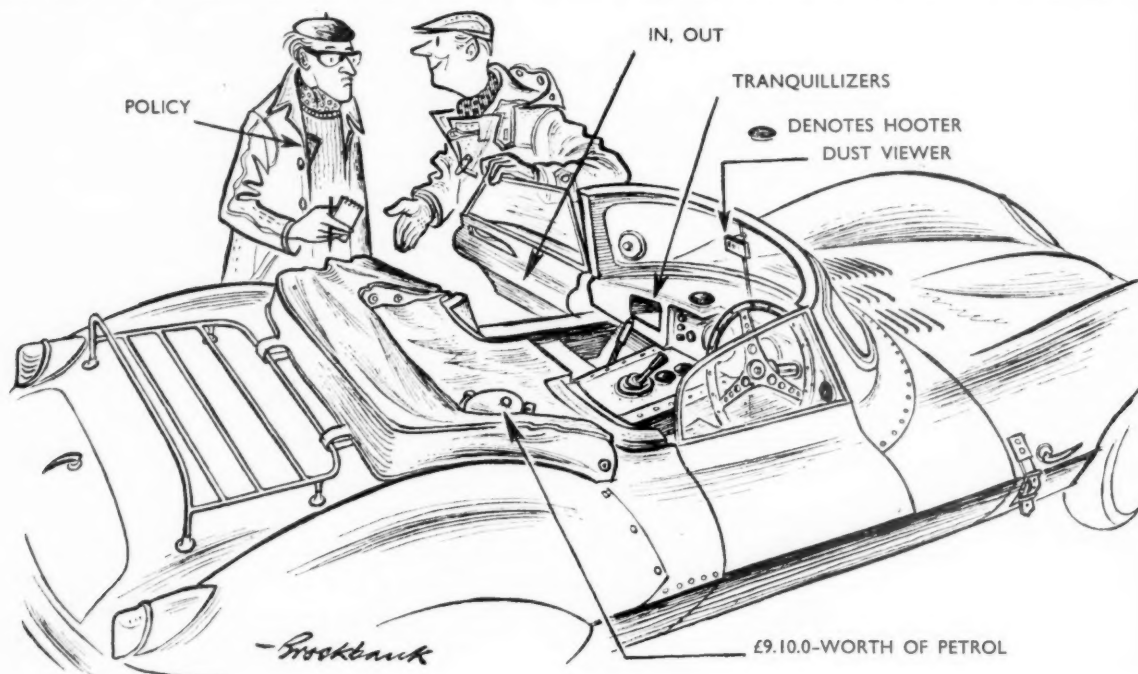
in stiff, hot porridge (the exhaust system travels up his left leg before clotting on the car's nearside exterior). His share of the fascia cuts him sharply below the kneecaps, or, later, when cringing sets in with the legs well drawn up, across the shinbone. The hand-brake will be found to fit conveniently up his right sleeve. The driver, if his boots aren't too wide, finds no difficulty in depressing the control pedals independently of each other, and can comfortably extend his legs to a squatting position. Over 100 m.p.h. he feels the cold, and wonders if there is any quick way of transferring half a dozen hot pipes to his side of the car.

There are four hooter buttons, two of which are sited near the gearshift and tend to be sounded simultaneously with the change—just when, in fact, warning of approach is not needed. It was found wise in our case, when the passenger

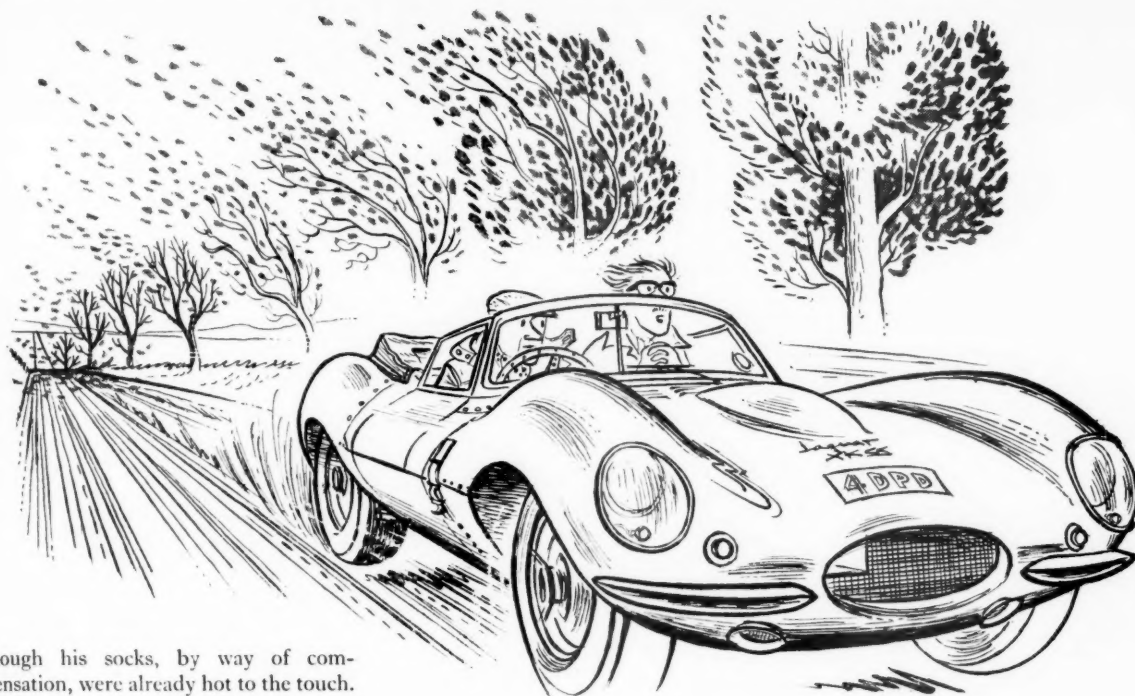
often wanted to hoot as well, to come to an agreement on whose fingers should fly to which button. This worked well, particularly as the driver tended to use the one in the centre of the wheel, which, as it happened, wasn't one.

There is no luggage accommodation. Space which might otherwise be handy for trunks, folding perambulators, playpens, sacks of lawn sand and the like is given over to thirty-eight gallons of fuel. The model tested was in Post Office red, with damp hand-prints on the passenger's door.

It was a fine autumn morning with a crispness in the air when, with dry roads and lips, we took off in a south-westerly direction. We at once entered Hampshire, twelve miles distant, at 96 m.p.h., and changed into top. By this time the portion of the passenger projecting above the windshield had the sensation of being embedded in an ice-block,



The Traffic Problem



"I see the leaves are on the turn."

though his socks, by way of compensation, were already hot to the touch.

The car was not offensively noisy, so far as it was possible to judge. That is, no adverse criticism was actually heard from scattering road-gangs, rocking wayside coffee-stalls or a middle-aged couple near Liphook whose picnic was blown up a grass bank. The noise is less a car noise than a pleasing *musique concrète* of wounded bison (engine), nose-flutes in ecstasy (tyres), and pigs at slaughter (disc brakes); in slow running the orchestration is further added to by spittings on giant flat-irons to simulate the six dyspeptic carburettors. This last effect, however, came in only after a rigid throttling down to 70-75 m.p.h. to conform to the requirements of built-up area restrictions.

A notable aspect of the test was the good behaviour of other motorists noticeable throughout. Even drivers clearly unaccustomed to being overtaken put their nearside wheels on the verge and waved us on just after we had gone past.

Lunch was taken in Salisbury, where some delay was experienced while the passenger, now shaped like an old soup-tin pressed for remelting, was prised out by the half-dozen heavy, fresh-faced young men in one-piece caps and fur-collared duffle coats who had been drawn from nearby driving-wheels and wished to see, stroke, sniff

and otherwise investigate the car. One of these insisted on joining us in the dining-room of the Cathedral Hotel, but would neither take anything nor remove his outer clothing in case we drove away suddenly and robbed him of the spectacle. We tried to turn his conversation from single dry plate clutches and protected air intakes by asking whether our chosen parking-site was police-proof, but he dismissed this as meaningless delirium and plunged into some exhaust manifolding on a DB3S Aston Martin. He later indulged us by saying that Salisbury was a very pro-motoring city, and never prosecuted cars of over 200 b.h.p.

On re-entering the car and beginning the return journey it was found that the passenger's lunch was folded up under the breastbone, where it promised to be a lasting obstruction. This proved to have been distributed more equably over the digestive system shortly after Alresford, where a smart piece of braking from 120 m.p.h. to a near standstill (58 m.p.h.), as a tribute to three motor-coaches overtaking two more round a bend, arrested an interesting zoom-lens effect and turned the driver's cap through 360 degrees.

To sum up, the "SS" isn't everyone's car. Everyone couldn't get in it. It eats up an immense amount of road, converting a ten-mile stretch of straight into something the size of a bus-ticket—and thus detracting from the finer points of the scenery. But for the man who wants to leave as much road as empty as possible for other people, who likes to overtake a convoy of six sand-and-gravel lorries with trailers in a space which the ordinary motorist would regard as a tight squeeze for overtaking an elderly lady pushing a bicycle, who doesn't mind having his passenger's boots on fire and a wife who sits by the telephone with palpitations as soon as the sound of his exhaust has died away, it may be said to exhibit certain points of advantage.



Proposal V

The motorist must be educated in the proper use of his vehicle.

TO the shrewd observer (or non-motorist) it has been obvious for some years now that far, far too many people in this country rush headlong into car-ownership (or slavery) without the smallest conception of what the correct function of the motor-car really is. They put down their first payment, and move to a house they don't much care for that has a nice garage. They buy maps of Essex, Birmingham, and the West Country. They jot down the names of recommended hotels between Rochdale and Portmadoc. They ask the price of picnic-baskets equipped with light-brown plastic forks and collapsible jugs. They enter boldly into conversations regarding sludge and differentials in the local pub. They amass extras, such as a heater, and one of those sucker things for ash that keep unsucking themselves from the window and tumbling into passengers' hats when you least expect it. They have achieved greatness.

So far so good, there's no gainsaying that.

But sooner or later the day dawns when in their blind folly they deliberately usher their assorted dependents into the seats so temptingly provided *inside* the vehicle, grasp the steering-wheel, set the whole shiny contraption in motion, and proceed with it out into the highways and byways of the land, come let, come hindrance, until at last they find themselves (swollen with pride and the poorer by a couple of quid for petrol) eating sandwiches miles from home in the company of half a dozen identical munching carloads huddled together hub to hub on some windswept verge with a view of lorries pounding

north and the feeling growing inside them that this is not the kind of situation the man normally finds himself in who can't *afford* a car.

Now this initial excursion, this first foolhardy adventuring into the great unknown, is the biggest single mistake the owner of a motor-car can possibly make, and for a very good reason. The reason is this. The proper and appointed place for a motor-car in these enlightened days—the jet age, as we call it—is *outside the front door being polished*. It has no other purpose on this earth than to provide a smooth surface for buckets of tap-water to cascade from, and wash-leathers, impregnated mops, wedges of cotton-waste, sponges or handfuls of old flannelette knickers to glide over on a Sunday morning or a Saturday afternoon.

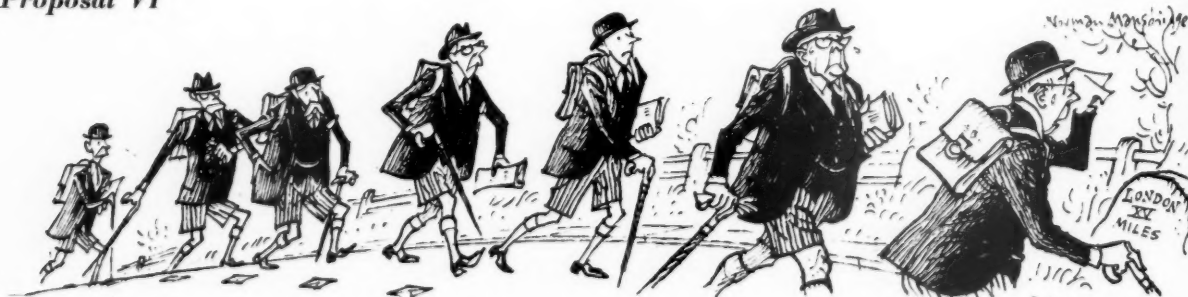
No matter what the advertisements say about the fluid flywheel this and the cruising speed of sixty that: the people who write all that stuff are old fogies who haven't yet caught up with the tempo of modern living. A motor-car is a precision-built piece of machinery clothed in pastel cellulose, mystic, wonderful, to be left standing tastefully in full view of the sitting-room window, and *preened*. And the sooner the motoring fraternity have this simple fact knocked into their skulls the nearer we will be to solving the allied problems of traffic congestion, parking space, wear and tear of roads, stomach ulcers, and premature baldness.

A heavy fine for first offenders should do the trick, combined with the nationwide issue of a booklet, amusingly illustrated to coat the pill, setting out

once and for all the limits to which a motorist may go: that is, from the garage to the oil-stained patch of road outside the front door and back. The widespread habit of driving the thing thirty-odd miles to the Hog's Back on a Sunday afternoon and polishing it *there*, in shirt-sleeves and braces, is cheating, and should be firmly scotched at the outset: give them an inch and before you know where you are the back streets of Finchley will be choked with cars from Edinburgh being cleaned the livelong day, and vice versa.

With a low-slung car there is nothing against having the odd rubber of bridge on the roof to while away an autumn evening. Nor could there be any serious objection to painting the thing in yellow and blue to resemble a winged chariot full of sporting nymphs and shepherds. The bonnet might even be lifted periodically without any serious harm being done, or the back jacked up to retrieve some kiddie's plaything that has rolled underneath and got jammed. Relations could sit in it from time to time, and smile at passers-by. The oil-level must obviously be checked, and the occasional new tyre fitted for the sake of appearances. Perhaps the releasing of the hand-brake, say once a month, and the gentle pushing to and fro of the vehicle to test for body-squeak need not be altogether frowned on. Some degree of latitude must clearly be permitted, after all, so long as the basic principle is not lost sight of: namely, that a car exists solely so that its owner may exercise his talents in keeping it free from outward blemish. It isn't difficult: thousands of motorists are already toeing the line. It just needs that little extra self-discipline from the remainder and we'll be well on the way to a solution of the most grievous problem of our day.

Proposal VI



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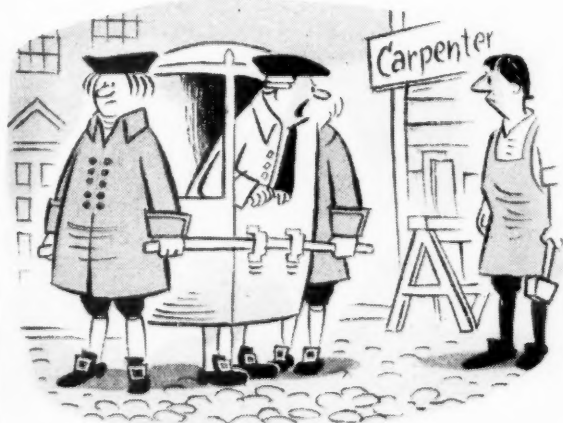
BODYWORK BY STARKE



"I like this idea of carrying a spare, but have you thought what it does to the power-weight ratio?"



"She's at her best on hills"



"It's been a week now! How much longer are you going to be with these damned floorboards?"



"I'm awfully sorry Lucasta, but we seem to have run right out of puff."

The Dog for the Car

By ALISON ADBURGHAM

BIG dogs ride in little motor cars and little dogs ride in big motor cars, that is the way it always goes. The tradition of the little dog in the big car stems from the era of disagreeable old ladies with decaying Pekingese, chauffeur-driven in Daimlers of the Queen Mary class; but there is also the factor that tiny dogs serve as foils to make big cars look bigger.

The tradition of the big dog in the little motor car is psychological in origin, the inferiority complex of the small roadster or runabout leading it to noisy self-importance, fussy flipper work, specialist gadgets, and other devices to attract attention; leading it also to deny the economy of high

m.p.g. by flaunting the obvious expense of keeping a high-calorie-consumption dog in good running order. The dog is never seen running, but only riding, so that it can in fact be kept on the cheap starchy diets which give only poor power and performance.

With the new breeds of miniature cars the big-dog cult slides from the extreme to the ridiculous. A Great Dane sits in a little bubble car, the glass misted up with his breath except where his great sweeping tongue operates as a windscreen wiper.

Clearly it is time to introduce some logic into our dog habits; and logically the miniature cars provide a splendid opportunity to bring about a revival of

the miniature dogs: King Charles Spaniels, Toys, Pugs, Poms and Pekingese, which have all become such *vieux jeu* since the passing of querulous mistresses and obsequious chauffeurs. Old ladies never die, indeed they are always with us; but rich old ladies went out with limousines. Looking back one sees those limousines as symbolic hearses to a civilization which was swept away with the bombs they feared would fall upon Bournemouth. But now sufficient time has passed for the toy dogs to have a second run, starting from scratch again without the stigma of being old ladies' pets. They can be kept up to scratch with the canine pep-up pills now obtainable, rich in vitamins of the B group, including aneurine. The possibility of too much scratch is catered for by various powder products on the market.

The theory of making the dog fit the car has its converse in getting the car to fit the dog. Those who already have a dog will certainly consider it first—dog owners always do consider them before everyone else. Thus, when buying a family car the married man with two poodles does not buy the model his wife has set her heart on unless it also suits the poodles. The idea of trading in a last year's poodle and getting the dog for the job never seems to occur. And yet, when all's said and done, a poodle is but a fashionable accessory, a tasteful appointment, an optional extra comparable in prestige value to white-walled tyres. Unlike other optional extras, however, the upkeep of a poodle is a constant drain. It is pointless to run it on the cheap, for that only defeats one's object of looking smart and monied. All chic poodles have shampoos and strips at least once every six weeks. These, including pedicure and ear toilet, cost around thirty shillings according to the size of the dog. That is the basic charge. Such things as colour rinses are of course additional. There is a dogs' beauty salon in Sloane Street, *Town and Country Dogs*, where white dogs can have colour rinses; blue or pink is currently chic. This salon has clients from all over the country, they even come down from Scotland; but most of its regular customers live in London or



"Whatever became of Lady Docker?"



the Home Counties. One is an apricot poodle called Maurice. Maurice is a model dog with vital statistics. He is photographed for magazine covers and advertisements and does film work.

Dog-wear, this season, is dapper. Poodles have always worn very deep collars because of their long necks, and now it is the thing to have them in white or pastel calf, lined with pigskin, and studded with coloured stones—just like Norman Hartnell's costume jewellery. These are for cocktail time. Full evening collars usually have diamanté décor. For morning shopping in Knightsbridge, pastel calf with plaited insets of contrasting kid are modish. And with the collars go the coats: velvet evening coats trimmed with mink at *Town and Country Dogs*; tailored felt "Debonair" coats, embroidered with Lurex, at *Dogs' Baths and Requisites Ltd.* This establishment in Beauchamp Place has been patronized by the royal dogs for over thirty years, starting with the Prince of Wales's cairns. Poodles come from as far away as the Channel Islands, because here they are hand-clipped with scissors, not with shears. In the bathroom the dogs are dried after their bath, on shelves with infra-red lamps; and although it is mixed drying, they are all so well bred that there are no contretemps nor *mal entendus*; if a dog dislikes his neighbour he simply ignores him or her; if he falls in love at first sight he simulates boredom. Each dog has a card index, a peg for his collar and lead, and is given an appointment card for his next visit.

Both these beauty salons have *boutiques*, selling clothes and accessories. Here are nylon fur coats in pastel colours, and proofed silk zip-fastened windjammers with long sleeves and

trouser legs; also canvas bootees with coloured laces. Polo-necked hand-knitted sweaters are the most popular casuals to-day, particularly with long-waisted dogs such as dandies and dachshunds whose figures are difficult for tailored coats. The sweater gives a sportive appearance to the standard sausage dog, a boyish look to the smaller chipolata strains, and are altogether mignon on the miniatures—the cocktail-sausage dogs. Harrods sell over a thousand of these sweaters every week from now until March. Other best-sellers are their plastic raincoats for slipping on in the sudden shower; and turkish dog-towels, made of nylon and cotton.

Dog furniture includes the Goddard folding metal-frame bed: with stretched canvas for sporting dogs and terriers, or with upholstered cushions for softies and sissies. Dogs prefer these to padded baskets because they think they are lying in armchairs. They fold completely flat for travelling, and are quickly erected for the dog's use at, for instance, the picnic lunch before the point-to-point. Upholstery can be ordered to go with car loose covers; and the dog should wear a matching motor-coat to complete the turnout.

For sporting occasions in very cold weather the National Fur Company have an ocelot coat for dogs, with a coat to match for their mistresses.

A thoughtful toilet requisite when visiting is the chlorophyll *Dog Grooming Cloth*: "Just a rub of the cloth cleans, purifies, kills odours, and imparts its own sweet freshness." And on a long journey a dog can be kept happy munching Kani-Kandi, a vitamin-enriched Pet's Sweet-Treat; or, alternatively can be deluded, fool that he is, with a solid rubber bone impregnated with a smell of chocolate. Pep-up pills are not recommended for a long trip, lively performance being required of the car but not the dog; indeed, one could wish for dog tranquilizers on the market.

Certainly a dog's life is not what it was. Nowadays, when race equality is everywhere professed, if not practised, it seems that the human race is the one which comes off worst. Why *should* dogs take everything from the community and give nothing? Let us be frank: the dog is a passenger through this mortal span, getting all the best things in life scot free: motor-cars, smart clothes, good food, a soft bed, and a mistress—a mistress who not only adores him but also keeps him.



People for Presents

The Student. He rubs elbows all day with long-dead sages. Or grinds out his thesis on Modern Waterworks Design. At Bart's, perhaps? Oh, those eternal notebooks, full of calculations on the number of N.H.S. patients needed to provide a new car annually! By night the quest for knowledge goes on. Espresso after Espresso, a weary round, probing for the latest thought on skiffle, next year's Le Mans. Pressure of this kind must be relieved, the experts say, at least once a week, preferably on Wednesdays—when, by a lucky chance, PUNCH comes out. Send him PUNCH for a year. Full subscription details are on page 464.



Design for a ceiling to commemorate Her Majesty



Ronald Searle

Her Majesty's visit to Canada and the United States

[After Tiepolo]

A STAFF OFFICER'S SAGA

IV. Private Army



IT was sad for Mike and me to have to leave the Political Control Division at such a critical time; but as Mike reminded the assembled officers at the conference where he broke the news of their impending disbandment, a soldier goes where he is sent. In Mike's case this meant that he was going to the War Office as Deputy Director of Civil Affairs; in mine, that I was going to Warsaw with a little empire of my own, known officially as "Special Liaison Section (Poland)" but unofficially as "the Parsons Mission."

My brief, given me by Mike Surplice personally, was vague. I was to move about Poland as much as possible, keep my eye on things generally, and in particular note the morale of the Polish and Russian forces. "In a way," Mike said, "it's a diplomatic rather than a military mission, but it's the kind of thing only a soldier can do properly."

"Shan't I get under the Military Attaché's feet?" I asked.

"He's been put in the picture," Mike said. "He will help you when you need help and leave you alone when you don't."

This is not the place for a detailed

description of our activities. It is enough to say that I sent back weekly reports to Mike through the diplomatic bag which he assured me were of the highest value. But when, after I had been there a little over a year, he was to be succeeded as D.D.C.A. by what he described as "a glamour boy who's been commanding divisions in Burma and so on," there seemed to be a question whether the reports would still be wanted. I made the bold suggestion that they might be sent to the Foreign Office instead, and Mike received this idea with enthusiasm.

"I've already got qualified agreement from Fitzgerald in the F.O.," he wrote, "for you to send your reports to him. He seems very keen. What I shall try to do, I think, is to put you completely under the F.O. for all purposes except pay."

A fortnight later I heard from Fitzgerald, whom I knew by repute as a very brilliant young civil servant. "Mike and I," he wrote, "have agreed with our respective masters that in future your reports will come direct to me." This suited me admirably, and I put all the more energy into my work in the knowledge that it was going where it would be appreciated.

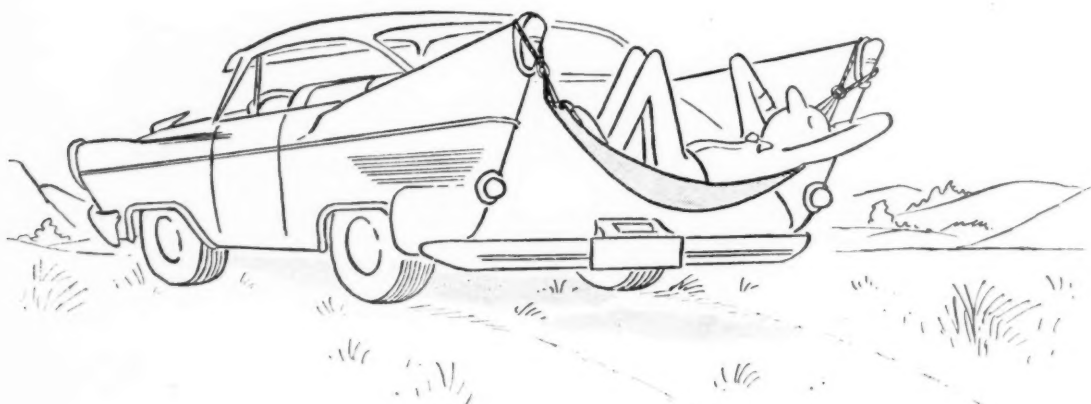
The time passed very agreeably, and,

alas, all too fast. In time my soldier driver, clerks and servant fell due for demobilization and I replaced them with civilians. I also asked for leave to wear civilian clothes on duty, on the ground that I should attract less attention; but for some reason this was not granted.

Early in 1951 Fitzgerald ceased to correspond with me, and my reports remained unacknowledged. I found this odd; but no one told me to stop sending them, so I went on doing so. I wrote a personal note to Fitzgerald, but this was never acknowledged either.

In the autumn of that year I called on the Military Attaché with a routine inquiry and to my surprise found the C.I.G.S. in his office. (I must confess that I did not know him at once for the C.I.G.S., but when we were introduced I recollected having heard somewhere that Field-Marshal Montgomery had been given some job in NATO.) "This is Parsons," the Military Attaché introduced me, "of the Parsons Mission."

"What denomination are you?" the C.I.G.S. asked. I explained that my Mission was military rather than religious; but to my surprise he had never heard of us and had no idea we were there. "Who do you deal with at the War Office?" he inquired.



Eric Burgin

"I deal with the F.O. direct," I explained. "It's an arrangement made between General Surplice and Fitzgerald."

"Fitzgerald?" The C.I.G.S. and the Military Attaché exchanged glances. "Do you mean Dermot Fitzgerald?"

"Indeed I do," I said.

"Have you heard from him lately?" the C.I.G.S. asked.

I told him he had stopped writing at the beginning of the year. "I'm not surprised," said the C.I.G.S., "as on the thirtieth of January he and another chap from the F.O. went missing and are now believed to be in Moscow."

I was considerably taken aback by this. Of course I had heard vaguely about the "missing diplomats," but I had been away on a reconnaissance when the story broke, and although in conversation during my rare visits to the Embassy I had heard a little about them, this was mostly gossip to the effect that they were chronic alcoholics, they were homosexuals, and so on. It never occurred to me to connect them with the sudden cessation of my letters from the Foreign Office.

I made some conventional expression of regret and asked the C.I.G.S. if he had any idea who was dealing with my reports since Fitzgerald's defection. "I shall lose no time in finding out when I get back," he said. "Meanwhile if I were you I shouldn't send any."

I left the Embassy in turmoil, and it did not come to me altogether as a surprise when a week later I received orders to close my Mission and return to England.

One odd event occurred during that last week. I went to say good-bye to my opposite number, the head of the Russian Intelligence Liaison Section, Colonel Dolokhov, with whom I had always got on well. He asked me to sit down, and from the top drawer of his desk produced a gold-and-enamel plaque with a coloured ribbon attached to it. When he handed it to me I saw that it was the badge of the Order of Kutuzov, Third Class.

"My government wishes me to give you this in their name," Dolokhov said, "on account of the good work you have done here and the excellent relations existing between your Mission and the Polish and Russian troops." My eyes filled with tears as I wrung the hand of this friendly man.



"It was a rather close assassination attempt—two of the bullets went right through my epaulets and five through my hat."

But as I left his office I saw on a table a file that changed my feelings entirely. It bore on it a label inscribed, in Russian, "Parsons Mission Reports," and, scrawled across it in red, "Closed December 1951." I could not blame poor Dolokhov, but my heart filled with bitterness for Fitzgerald when I thought how much labour had been put into those reports and what value they might have held for our own Foreign Office.

When I got home I found that both the War Office and the Foreign Office had completely lost trace of me since 1947, when Mike Surplice had left the Army to return to the University. However, there was no reason why this should have affected my seniority, and

I made it clear to the Military Secretary that I had no intention of retiring into the backwoods to become a C.R.E. in some provincial garrison. He said he would bear my record in mind and suggested that in the meantime I might like to take some leave, as I had a tremendous amount due to me.

I gladly accepted this suggestion and took a cottage in Sussex where I retired with a trunkful of White Papers to try and catch up with the interesting social changes that had come over England since I had last lived there, some of which, I thought, might have a material bearing on my future whether in the Service or, if fate so willed, elsewhere.

B. A. YOUNG

A Trip to Sylt

By ANTHONY CARSON

I WAS in Hamburg when I saw an advertisement saying "Come to Sunny Sylt." There were those wonderful German photographs of sand, seagulls and blonde hair in a filtered breeze (Germany *is* a photograph), so I went in to a travel bureau and bought a ticket. "It's by ship," said the assistant, handing me a huge pile of pamphlets full of photographs of sea-foam, and a long list of hotels, guest-houses and pensions.

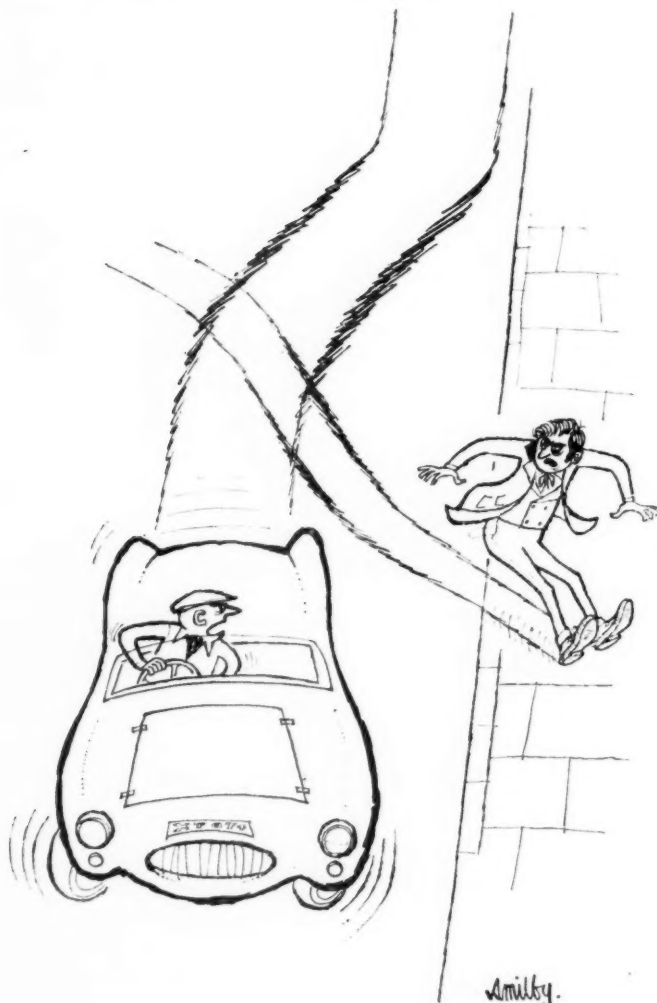
The ship left Landungsbrücken at seven-thirty in the morning. It was called the *Wappen von Hamburg*, neat and clean as a pin, the sun was shining and seagulls screamed and sobbed at the stern. Precisely at the half-hour the

ship began to move, the siren hooted, and a military band played over the loud-speaker. Then the music stopped. "Good morning all," said an avuncular yet official voice. "It is a beautiful day. I hope you enjoy your trip." We floated down the Elbe, people basked in deck chairs (Why can I never get a deck chair?), had breakfast in streamlined saloons or took photographs of ships whose occupants were taking photographs of them. Everyone was busy, binoculars out, pointing, informing, annotating, breathing deeply, map-reading. They were helped by the loud-speaker voice, anticipating their questions. "We are now passing the lightship *Siegfried*, six thousand tons."

We arrived at Cuxhaven, and after the new lot of excursionists had come on board the voice said "Good morning, newcomers. It is a beautiful day. I hope you enjoy your trip." At twelve o'clock the music stopped and the voice said in a rich soupy tone "Lunch is now being served. A very good appetite to you all."

Before reaching Heligoland the sky went black, there was lightning, thunder and drenching rain. The ship tossed in sudden waves, but nobody moved to shelter, nobody was sick, there was regulated singing and faces to the spray. Finally we reached Sylt. It looked like a sand-dune packed with youth. I had never seen so much youth. I had come new to Germany, but there are in fact now, in the West, not differentiated countries—only map references of youth and ideas. The rest is journalism. I felt old and white. The tiny port was called Hornung, and at the sand-chiselled station there was a strange train which ended up with a snout of a sort of motor-bus. I got in and the train shuffled along through sand and scrub and I felt I was in the right sort of primitive island to work the alcohol out of my system and get nearer to youth and ideas. We passed one or two tiny stations with youth establishments and I looked out for the name Westerland. After an hour's travelling through wilderness the train approached quite a large town. I had actually had factory chimneys. I got out at the station and inquired for lodgings, and managed to acquire a room at about Ritz price with breakfast extra.

The town was something like the Riviera but smarter, the people were larger, richer and walked about in dressing-gowns or shorts, black as Papuans. It was remorselessly clean, and there was something pathetic about a notice outside a hygienic dance-hall which said "Existentialist Night." I was surprised to find an R.A.F. Malcolm Club and was accepted as a temporary civilian member. I met a girl called Cynthia. "This is the top R.A.F. base," she said. "Target practice. Good parties. Don't have much to do with the Germans, thank God. Going to train some of them, though. Good Luftwaffe types; pity they got beaten



Amilky.

up by the locals." "Who are the locals?" I asked her. "Most of the locals are D.P.s from the Eastern Zone," said Cynthia, "otherwise there are only cows. The D.P.s rent their rooms at huge prices and live all the summer in greenhouses, coal-cellar and so on. We just keep to ourselves and the chaps fly and there's plenty of whisky. It's like England really. Come to a party to-night."

The next morning I went on the beach wearing shorts and a sports shirt. My legs were as white as a font. It cost four shillings to get on to the beach. There was a sort of Sports and Physical Re-education Club where at least fifty men and women were doing gymnastics to the beat of a drum. I went down the steps and on to the sand which was crowded with people lying in circular sand-pits, some with flags on them. They made me think of ant-lions. I went on walking far down the beach for at least a mile until I discovered nobody had anything on. I was in the nudist quarter of Sylt. There was a huge noticeboard saying FREIKORPERKULTUR and there was a little box and an official in a white uniform with a whistle and a telescope. Here were more ant-lion pits and sun-black bodies like huge



bottles, balloons, Michelin tyre advertisements, interspersed with the fine music of girls and a Spring of children. I selected a pit, undressed and limped into the sea. It was as sweet as new grass. I walked up and down the beach, pulling in my stomach, shedding years, and suddenly began to run and run, jumping over the ant-lion nests, splashing the starry surf, my face to the sun.

Suddenly I heard a whistle blowing.

Guilty to all whistles and far cries, I stopped, gazed with short sight into the face of a fully clothed woman, her mouth open, rigid as a trapped cat. It was Cynthia. "I think . . ." I began. The whistle was near my ear and an official was at my elbow. "What are you doing here?" cried the official. "It is five marks fine." "But FREIKORPERKULTUR . . ." I said.

"It is half a mile back," he shouted.

Precedent

By CLAUD COCKBURN

DESCRIBING as "a thoroughly undesirable precedent" the reported appointment of Russian ex-Foreign Secretary Shepilov as school-teacher at Frunze, Khirgistan, a spokesman of the National Union of Teachers said that the news had been received with alarm by schoolmasters everywhere.

"Every temptation to follow this Russian example," he said, "must be strenuously resisted. We cannot permit the teaching profession to be regarded as a refuse dump for unwanted Cabinet Ministers, ex-editors and unsuccessful conspirators. At this rate, every Sunday newspaper rumour of a Cabinet 'shake-up' will become a nightmare for parents and children alike, as they shrinkingly await the arrival in the classroom of some ex-Minister whose only qualification for the job is that he has quarrelled with Mr. Macmillan."

In the United States even stronger fears were expressed.

An average child, interviewed on TV, said he knew nothing much about Shepilov and supposed that if the worst came to the worst English school children could "take" Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, but broke down and sobbed when asked how he would feel if he saw Mr. Foster Dulles thudding up the path to the Little Red Schoolhouse.

"Oh, please, please," he cried, "don't let President Eisenhower do that thing to us."

A student of Russian affairs, author of *Through the Russian Enigma with Crystal and Ouija Board*, reports sharp dissatisfaction in Frunze.

In a letter to the *Frunze Gazette* "Mother of Four" asks "Who is this Shepilov? I have searched in vain for any mention of him in the latest late extra evening edition of the Soviet encyclopædia. Why should this nonentity from, I understand, Moscow be foisted on Frunze children? The whole business smacks of jobbery. In

any case my eldest boy informs me that the man is badly in need of a haircut—a thoroughly bad example to Soviet youth. I suppose it will be skiffle while you work next. And then they prate of juvenile delinquency."

Already a committee of parents has had occasion to complain of what they allege amounts to "gross mental cruelty" on the part of the newly-appointed teacher.

"Twice this week," one of them told a reporter from the *Gazette*, "my small son came home crying because of the way he kept scowling at him. When I went to Mr. Shepilov's house to complain, all he could say was that the poor little fellow reminded him of Mr. Khrushchev. Even if true, it is emphatically not the sort of thing a teacher should say to a parent, certainly not without proper preparation. Have these cold-blooded so-called pundits no respect for our feelings?"

On another occasion, according to the

Gazette, a girl student was rebuked in a "savage" manner merely because in modern history class she happened to ask the new teacher a question which he seemed, for some reason, to resent.

"All I asked," Sonia Mishkov said, "was could he tell us all about those people Molotov and Malenkov and another man whose name I couldn't remember, except that he was a filthy snake nurturing himself in the bosom of the party until such time as he was ready to empty his poison-ducts into the veins of the heroic Soviet people before delivering them bound hand and foot into the clutches of the Voice of America?"

"Imagine my astonishment when he jumped up and shouted out 'Where d'you kids pick up all that tommy rot?"

I suppose you're one of the little wretches who spend the evenings glued to the radio. Your parents ought to know better than let you waste your time like that. Or are you by chance'—he was awfully sarcastic—'a subscriber to *Pravda*? Remind me to tell you a thing or two about that particular organ of unvarnished fact and fearless comment.' Naturally we were all very much shocked."

Mr. Shepilov has also been criticized for his attempt to get the time of his history classes changed from morning to a late hour in the evening on the ground that what was an historical axiom at 10.30 a.m. may have turned into a vicious distortion of the facts before nightfall.

"Under my plan," Shepilov urged,

"these future citizens of a new society, embryo commissars for Heavy Industry, Heroes of Labour, etc., will at least have an up-to-date interpretation of everything to take to bed with them. Besides, comrade parents, I don't want to be in the position of keeping the class in a roar all morning with that story of old fuddy-duddy Stalin trying to run the war with a child's globe and a bottle of vodka, and find from the afternoon papers that Khrushchev's little utterance on the subject was somewhat misreported, and what he really said was that, compared to good old Joe, Napoleon and Clausewitz were amateurs and our beloved leader was a tea-drinker who thought spirits were for cleaning spots off his necktie."

The complaints of teachers concerning the "Shepilov precedent" were the subject of impatient comment from leading electricians and diplomats.

"What about our position?" demanded a leading power-station manager in Yorkshire. "I see there are reports that Malenkov has been pulled out of his Siberian power-station under arrest, but the harm has been done. As a result of his original appointment you find people all over the place have got the idea that any old political butter-fingers, kind of man who can't run a medium-sized devilish plot without the whole thing coming apart in his hand, is good enough to fill an executive position in the electrical industry. Brings our whole profession into disrepute."

A well-known ambassador who asked that his name be withheld said "I have kept silence until now regarding that disgraceful Molotov business, but when it comes to teachers and electricians raising all this rumpus I feel I must speak out. I didn't come to this Embassy here to be insulted. Yet only the other day a small nephew of mine asked his father 'Was Uncle George a criminal or just a hopeless flop at whatever he was doing before?'"

"The lad had read all about Molotov being appointed ambassador to Outer Mongolia, and now has firmly in his head the notion that people are made ambassadors only as a punishment for something or other. He tells all his friends so, and they go off and tell their parents that his own nephew says the British Ambassador was recently involved in some thoroughly unsavoury



"What are you doing in my cabin?"

scandal. People have started to look askance. How can I be expected to establish goodwill and sign a trade treaty under conditions like that?"

A prominent Foreign Minister, who requested that he be not identified, said "There is no doubt that the new situation is enough to give you the jumps. When I came to this Ministry all you needed to know about the average new ambassador when he handed in his credentials was whether he had bought the job for cash, got it because they have to give a penniless career-man a plum sometimes for fear of attack in the newspapers, or was being paid off for some political fiddle. Services rendered, and all that sort of thing. If they're going to take to appointing people simple as a penalty for wrong doing, or because they want to humiliate them, we are going to get a different class of man in the *corps diplomatique*. It's bound to affect the tone, you know."



"No—this is the one I said was named Elsie."

Letters of a Lady Doctor to a Noble Earl

MY DEAR C.,—I remember when I was a little girl that the cat one day jumped up on my lap. It was at that moment that I realized for the first time that I was not unattractive to cats. I had never thought about such things very much before. You know what the young are and how they very often do not think about things until some other thing happens and makes them think about the thing that they would not have thought about if it had not been for the other thing. But ever since then the cause of the cat has always been very dear to my heart. I have spoken on I can't say how many platforms in favour of equal food for cats and dogs, and have often argued that it is unfair for people to look down on cats simply because they cannot bark. After all, who served the country better than Ernest Bevin during the war? And yet when I once heard him try to bark like a dog he was most unimpressive. We cannot all of us be good at everything, can we? Yet I must say that, after all that we in the Socialist movement have done over the years to raise the status of cats, it is a little sad to find that cats still take the same old-fashioned reactionary attitude towards

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

mice that they did in the days of their grandparents. Only yesterday I saw our cat standing, as it were, positively on guard when it heard the scratching of the mice behind the wainscot. Don't you think that it would have been better if for once the cat had simply trusted the mouse not to go into the larder? After all, there is plenty of food in our house both for cats and mice if only it was properly distributed, and I am very sure that my husband would not grudge either of them their fair share—nor would my daughter either.

Have not cats and mice rights just as much as human beings? Why should not the poor little mice "scurry" if they want to? I am not anti-cat, nor am I anti-mouse. All I ask is that we should be impartial and do all that we possibly can in this world to see that there is justice both for cats and for mice, and indeed for all furry little creatures. Don't you agree? I'm sure that you do.

E.

DEAR E.,—My wife once had a cat but it was run over by a tram. That was before trams were abolished. I was

not very interested. There were some mice, too, when I was at Haileybury. I seem to remember that they nibbled through a rope. So we put down poison for them.

C.

MY DEAR C.,—Yes, but why did the mice nibble through the rope? Surely you must have realized that if you had not left the rope lying about the mice would never have been able to nibble it. And then are you sure that you did all that you could—I quite understand that it was not all your responsibility? The headmaster should have seen to it himself, but we all of us have our share of responsibility—haven't we? Are you sure that you did all that you could to make certain that the mice had their proper rations of cheese—and of the right quality? My experience is that very few mice will eat a rope when they can get cheese. These are, I feel, the questions that you ought to have asked yourself.

E.

DEAR E.,—I am not interested in mice, so I did not ask myself any of these questions.

C.

MY DEAR C.,—I am even more

interested in flies. I saw a man the other day. A fly settled on his nose. He flicked it off in an irritated fashion and it was obvious from his manner that he never gave the fly another thought. But I could not help feeling that it was very selfish of him to have had no concern except whether his own nose was tickling. He should—don't you agree?—have tried to look at things from the fly's point of view? Of course I am the first to admit that that is not easy. It is awfully difficult, I always feel—don't you?—to understand what exactly flies are for. My husband says that they lay eggs, and so they do, but they are not a very nice sort of egg. But even though it is not always easy to like flies, I do feel that we ought always to try. Flies, it is true, may buzz, but at least they do not box. I do think that it is so unfair of men to call a certain sort of boxer a flyweight. It makes people who would never have otherwise thrown a thought to the matter give flies a bad name. I once tried to explain all this to a Tory M.P. but he said to me "That 's all very well, but let us be honest about it. Would you like it if you found that your daughter was going out with a fly? That's the real point." But it is not the point at all. One cannot decide things by bringing in these personal questions. Of course we can settle all these

problems in a moment, but it is not a matter of what flies are now. After all, they have not had all our advantages. The question is what they are going to become in the future. Look what horses are like to-day and look at what they were in the old unbridled days of Victorian competition before we Socialists started to battle for their rights.

E.

DEAR E.,—I do not like flies. When I was at Downes Park I used to play fly-half. There were a lot of flies in Gallipoli. I am not very interested in horse-racing, but I would not interfere with it on account of Chuter Ede.

C.

MY DEAR C.,—I would not forbid

horses to run in the Grand National, but I do think it a little unkind to make them run so fast. Don't you agree with me that fly-half is a much nobler title than stand-off half? There is something so very anti-social and class-conscious about stand-off half. A half-back ought to mix with the other players as an equal. Don't you feel that the time has come when the Government ought to do something spectacular about flies—appoint some well-known fly to a post of responsibility which would show that we are sincere when we say that flies have rights as well as human beings?

E.

DEAR E.,—I do not think that the flies would measure up to the job.

C.

...Nor Iron Bars a Cage

LIBERTY-lovers have a lot to learn
From Djilas, whose offence it was to think.
He got two years for speaking out of turn
And seven more for writing out of clink.

Clearly they should have done him in, and then
Action and thought would have alike been checked;
For dead men tell no tales, but captive men
Tell them, as captive, to the more effect.

Cage up your simple murderer: he can
Commit no murder being close confined.
It does not do to cage your thinking man:
To cage his body will not stop his mind.

It is the thinking that offends in him,
Which is not captive though the man is caught.
The force denied its outlet in the limb
Invigorates the venom of the thought.

Being alive, he thinks. His thought takes shape
In mobile words. The brain in which they bred
Is yours to batter, but the words escape.
Do not confine him: he is better dead.

Words take on fifty subtle forms to flout
The regulations, and are bound to win.
If stony limits cannot keep love out,
They are not likely to keep anger in.

P. M. HUBBARD



"Oh good. You've found it."



"Frankly, Governor, we're rather perturbed about this estimate of 4,000 tons of ticker tape descending on the Royal Procession."

Reading Maketh a Full Man

SYSTEMATIC, reliable, punctual; that was my friend Reader until lately, when he started to slip. A train behind the usual one in the morning, ten minutes late for a lunch date, a couple of urgent letters unwritten, and always that hunted look; all so unlike him that I had to ask outright what was the matter.

At first he was evasive but finally he stammered "Well, it's trying to keep up with these forty-page Sunday papers. It's like this satellite affair is, I suppose, to geophysicists. Sitting there trying to catch up on your calculations when blip! the thing whizzes past again and you plot some more graphs and ninety-five minutes later blip! again before you're half-way through sorting out the last lot of radar recordings."

"But surely you don't *have* to read all forty pages?" I suggested.

"It's a sort of challenge," he replied. "Fivepence is a lot of money to a man who remembers the dailies at a half-penny, and I like to get value. You see all that lot on the table and it may be good for all you know and you've paid for it. You daren't turn over much at breakfast for fear of the marmalade and milk so you swot up on the index, then when the room has cleared a bit and you can swing the pages about you know your way round. But what with the garden, the car, or something it's seldom I'm up to page nineteen by Sunday bedtime. Then work sets in. Same thing Monday evening, Tuesday, and so on—television, telephone rings; I'm lucky to be in the early thirties by Saturday night. Mind you, it's better since the clock went back. Nothing to be done outdoors after six o'clock, gives you a chance to tackle *My Life in Ballet* or those old battles before you start dozing off.

And all's to do again on Sunday—that's the nightmare; could be three or four letters to the editor on Sin and a Mephisto crossword behind when the paper-boy is whistling away in the early light like something out of *Pippa Passes* and knocking at the door because he's no hope of crunching it all through the letter-box. I don't mind telling you I gave *People of the Gospels* and *In the City* a miss last week. It keeps piling up all the time. Cumulative, that's the only word for it."

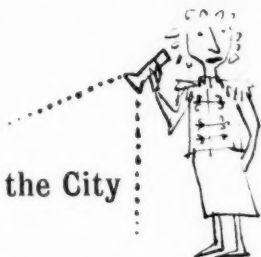
His voice had gone shrill, as often happens to a man with a grievance, and his eyes had the fear-glazed stare of a cornered animal. I saw now the stark truth behind the newspaper's own words: "More and more people are keeping it to read not only on Sunday but through the week."

LESLIE MARSH



"She won't eat, either."

In the City



Advice from a Stranger

THE banks—to be more precise the Big Five Plus clearing banks—have been accumulating more money in time deposit accounts than they know what to do with. Traditionally the banks offer depositors an interest rate 2 per cent below Bank Rate, and at 5 per cent their adjusted terms are bright enough, in a purely figurative sense, to attract money that is looking round anxiously for a more permanent home.

These are horribly difficult days for the investor. During the last week I have listened to half a dozen brands of reasonably convincing advice, and unfortunately they cannot *all* be accepted without hitting a very low punting average. For good or ill the investor has to follow his own nose through the wordy maze of prognostication, and hope that one at least of the following avenues of thought will lead him into the clear.

"This is it," said A. "This time the Government really means business. In six months' time there'll be a million unemployed and inflation will be dead. Profits will be cut everywhere and industrial shares will slump to a record low. Strikes? Yes, there'll be strikes a-plenty, serious ones, but this time there'll be no easy victories for the unions. If you've any sense you'll unload those equities in double-quick time."

"It's obvious," said B, "that the country can't stomach Bank Rate at 7 per cent for more than a month or two. The appalling extra weight of servicing national debt makes 7 per cent inflationary, dangerous, ludicrous. In any case the rate was put up only to restore an international monetary balance upset by speculators. My advice is to sit pretty and wait for conditions to right themselves."

"We've had inflation almost continuously for two thousand years," said C, "and I can't see anyone halting it. Industrial shares have taken a very heavy knock since Bank Rate went up, and can now be bought at bargain prices. Buy 'em, then!"

"I'm switching to fixed interest

securities," said D, "and I advise you to do the same. They've been in the doldrums long enough, their yields are remarkably good and the tighter the squeeze on credit the better will be their chances of capital appreciation. I'm all for Gilts and Preference shares."

"Can't see anything stopping Cousins and Co.," said E. "Wage-inflation will continue, and there's only one decent hedge against it. Known it all along. Stick to your industrials."

"A Labour Government within a year at most," said F. "That means more nationalization, more subsidies, heavier taxation and a capital gains tax. My advice is to get out of the equities market and put your dibs into some building society."

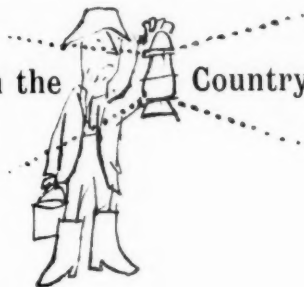
"You'll have observed," said G, "that the Treasury has bumped up the interest rate on Tax Reserve Certificates to 3½ per cent free of income tax, surtax,

and profits tax. I can't think of a better investment at the moment. I mean to say, taxes look like becoming a permancency, don't they?"

Take your pick—3½ per cent tax-free from Tax Reserve Certificates, yields of 5½ per cent on Gilts, 8 per cent and more from the H.P. finance companies, 7 or 8 per cent from brewing and distilling, 10 per cent from textiles, and anything up to 30 per cent from mining! My own view is that for the small investor who cannot afford to switch with the economic weather report there is still no safer home for savings than the unit trusts. The yields are not spectacularly good, but I do not believe that disinflation offers much threat to their long-term capital values. Municipal and General, Bank Insurance, Allied Investors, National and Orthodox are still worth watching. MAMMON

* * *

In the Country



Jungle Fruit

PERHAPS I was misinformed. At any rate, when I was a child I was told that everything in nature had a purpose and a use, and had been created to fulfil a specific need. Looking round the world I perceived that the theory was obviously valid: cows had been created to keep the grass down; nuts had been thought of because of squirrels, or squirrels were invented to pick up the nuts—no matter, the two were plainly complementary; in the same manner that little girls are useful to little boys and lemon is appropriate to Dover sole.

Odd as it may seem, this nursery theology satisfied me. It seemed to accommodate everything, and gave to all significant purpose: vultures were created to pick up carrion; wasps to devour rotting fruit; and even dramatic critics found some place in this scheme of things. But yesterday my philosophy let me down badly.

I was out picking blackberries. The hedges this year are loaded with luscious fruit. There must be a couple of tons on my farm alone. No more

than five pounds will be picked. I suddenly realized that blackberries had no purpose. For some reason, birds don't bother to feed on them—probably because of the thorns; and even when the fruit falls, rats and mice leave it severely alone. The crop just wastes.

Either the theory of purpose and need is a complete fallacy or the species for which blackberries were originally created has perished. Could it be that anthropologists have a clue here to discover some missing link? Was there, at some time or other, a bird now extinct which had leathery feathers impervious to prickles? If the skeleton of such a creature were unearthed, my theory would be re-established.

Of course there is one other possibility. And that is blackberries were created to bury the mess man would eventually make of the world. It's a fact that if we didn't cut the hedges every year brambles would reach right across the fields within seven seasons. In ten years the whole of England would become an impenetrable jungle beneath which our bungalows, garages, roads, temples and theology would be completely hidden. And obviously that is the blackberries' purpose. One well worth waiting for. RONALD DUNCAN

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"HER MAJESTY'S. (Whi. 6606.) Mon.-Fri., Evgs., 7.30. Sats., 5.30 and 8.30. Mat., Weds., 2.30. Barry Nelson, No Times FOR SERGEANTS. 'Very Funny.'—S. Times."

Advertisement in The Times

Not really Top People, perhaps.



BOOKING OFFICE

Artist at Large

Golden Sections. Michael Ayrton. With a foreword by Wyndham Lewis. Methuen, 25/-

MR. MICHAEL AYRTON is well known as a painter. In these essays we are shown other sides of him; his musical interests, his critical approach, sidelights on his friends, his own habits. There is an acute examination of the fourteenth-century Sienese painter Barna, and the sculptor Giovanni Pisano. There are pieces about Picasso, Wyndham Lewis, Constant Lambert, Baedeker and other subjects.

The investigation of Picasso's work is dealt with in two essays written with a dozen years between them. Both contain plenty of good points. The second of these essays somewhat modifies the indictment of Picasso that the first was—not quite justly—generally taken to be; but this cooler consideration does not detract from—indeed decidedly strengthens—some of the initial broadsides.

Mr. Ayrton compares Picasso with Midas, not only in the sense that everything he touches becomes literally international currency but also critically speaking, in that Picasso can now do no intellectual or visual wrong. He is beyond criticism. Even when he tears up a piece of paper it is reverently reproduced. It is of course Picasso's great gifts that have put him in this position, but there can be no doubt that he has established over painting a hegemony as ominous as any imposed in the past by "academic" art.

The two essays on Wyndham Lewis seem a bit handicapped by that over-protecting that made Lewis himself such a bore when hawking his own wares. The more one is told that an artist is being hardly treated by his colleagues and the critics, deliberately ignored, and so on, the more one is tempted to become suspicious and suppose that if this is true—and in Lewis's case it certainly was not true—there is some good reason for it.

It is really doing Lewis no service, so it seems to me, to continue that particular line. He deliberately—sometimes perhaps rightly—made himself disagreeable to a number of individuals and groups; then he seemed surprised when they hit back. He was a considerable figure both as a painter and writer. There were always plenty of eminent people to say that in print.



It is true that he was not financially successful, but could that be expected of the work he produced? Towards the end of his life he was very properly given a Civil List pension by the Government. The more he is built up as a combination of bogymen and neglected genius, the more we are brought face to face with his own persecution mania. His introduction to this book is the last thing Lewis wrote.

For my own part I was most interested in Mr. Ayrton's memoir of Constant Lambert, an old and close friend of mine and a man of tremendous brilliance. Mr. Ayrton reproduces here his portrait of Lambert, a very striking likeness, although, to tell the truth, not

one that displays an aspect of its subject I find most sympathetic. In the same way the essay emphasizes a side of him that most certainly existed but is not at the same time by any means the whole story. All the same, pending the appearance of a full-length book about him (it was a great tragedy that Hubert Foss, the music critic, died before completing Lambert's biography), one is grateful for something as entertaining, genuine and first-hand as Mr. Ayrton's reminiscence.

Closely allied to friendship with Constant Lambert (with whom guide-book language was also a favourite theme) is the essay on Baedeker. I am aware that guide-book material has already provided a wealth of jokes, some good, some bad, in the past; but a new light on Baedeker's style is always acceptable to anyone addicted to the subject. All would agree with Mr. Ayrton that 1897 to 1909 is the Golden Age for Baedeker, both stylistically and morally (although the irony of an 1887 *Russia* I possess must be admired; it lists two hotels for Tashkent, the first described as "Tolerable"; the second "With large garden"). Mr. Ayrton rightly considers in the top class the advice that must have followed a really dreadful Continental post office experience: "No attempt should be made to send parcels from Spain." These essays are to be recommended.

ANTHONY POWELL

Happy Childhood

Drawn from Memory. Ernest H. Shepard. Methuen, 21/-

To his friends it must seem incredible that anyone so young as Ernest Shepard should have gone in a horse-bus to Victoria's Jubilee celebrations, or seen the glow of Whiteley's fire. In the near-country of St. John's Wood in the 'eighties he was a very happy, very observant, small boy, with devoted parents, aunts in Gordon Square who kept two men's hats in the hall to frighten burglars, an important uncle who flicked blotting-paper pellets round

Lloyds, and "our own policeman," hero to a regiment of nannies.

We meet them all in this vivid account of a year or so of his childhood. It is written simply and amusingly; on nearly every page is a drawing to complete our feeling that we were there, and several surviving nursery sketches point clearly to the future. His was the luckiest sort of Victorian upbringing, and he passes on a harvest of period detail which adults and children should enjoy equally.

E. O. D. K.

The Selected Writing of Sydney Smith.

Edited by W. H. Auden. *Faber*, 30/-

This accumulation of Sydney Smith's prose gives a far better idea of his real character than the various remarks of his which have survived into our own time to bear out his great contemporary reputation as a wit. Here we can read him upon Catholic Emancipation, the emoluments of the clergy, the Reform Bill, female education, and many other subjects of a similar kind. He was an enormously hard-working and very intelligent clergyman, whose amusing conversation and vitality made him popular in fashionable society. He was also a brilliant journalist; but, as with all polemical writing, one feels after a time weary of it, however commendable the cause advocated. Perhaps this is because of a feeling that the polemics would be no less lively if recommending arguments of precisely the reverse school. Smith's fire depends largely upon incongruity of images, e.g. (of puritanical parsons) "cribbage must be played in caverns, and sixpenny whist take refuge in the howling wilderness." Mr. W. H. Auden in his introduction presents Smith as one of the foremost figures in the English liberal tradition. Mr. Auden's statement that there were no London clubs in 1771 arouses misgivings. What about White's, Boodle's, and Brooks's?

A. P.

A Family Party. John O'Hara. *Cresset Press*, 8/6

The Hitler war did much to change the view, long held by British publishers, that a novel should be eighty thousand words minimum length. In the U.S.A. where Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* and John O'Hara's *Hope of Heaven* had sold successfully at half that length, the conditions imposed upon authors were less rigorous, and greater latitude spread gradually to this country, where O'Hara's latest story—perhaps less than fifteen thousand words long—is now printed as a separate volume. Cast in the shape of a speech made by a retired editor in honour of Dr. Sam Merritt's forty years' service to the community of Lyons, Pennsylvania (35 miles from Gibbstville), it not only draws a subtle portrait of the doctor but of the town itself when trees instead of parking meters grew on Main and Market Streets. Change and decay of human values (disguised as progress)

are skilfully suggested (through the bluntness, the heavy witticisms, the elephantine delicacy) by a master of the vernacular ("I can't recall the name of the famous Greek person that made up the oath that all doctors are supposed to take").

J. M-R.

A Girl among Poets. John Symonds. *Chapman and Hall*, 13/6

This odd little novel seems to be an attempt to do for the poetic life what the novels of a generation ago did for the artistic life. There are rich patronesses and eccentrics and scenes in London squalor and scenes in Spain. There are some very funny drinking scenes. The heroine goes from bed to bed. The trouble is, one never believes that the poetry written by the characters is any particular kind of poetry. They never discuss real poets. If Mr. Symonds is writing farce he is not wholehearted enough and if he is really talking about the function of the Egeria in Inspiration he pursues his theme rather faintly.

However, if the whole is indefinite, some of the parts are very enjoyable. There is an actor, once an electrical engineer, who has become so stage-struck that he will not even mend a fuse at home; the Hackwood family alone are worth the price, as we reviewers, who get the book free, like to put it.

R. G. G. P.

A Regency Visitor. Edited by E. M. Butler. *Collins* 21/-

In 1826 Prince Puckler returned to England to seek an heiress ready to prop up his tottering treasury at Muskau and share his household with his divorced wife, still his mistress. The search was unsuccessful, but his letters home proved a best-seller. Unfortunately they were pruned both of his indiscretions and of the pantomime of his wife-hunt; and Sarah Austin's contemporary translation into English pruned them still further. What might have been an extremely entertaining book is left an interesting but skippable record, well edited by Miss Butler.

For a German, much given, in spite of his rakish life, to heavy philosophy, he was strangely francophile. Like Taine later, he was staggered by our wealth. He met everyone, from the king downwards, and travelled insatiably, assuaging his passion for parks and forming the opinion that unless the aristocracy learned better manners they were for it. He seems to have been an intelligent though solemn observer, and he gives a fresh slant on late Georgian England.

E. O. D. K.

The Black Obelisk. Erich Maria Remarque. (Trans. Denver Lindley). *Hutchinson*, 15/-

Though written in the present tense, Mr. Remarque's latest novel is set in the Germany of the nineteen-twenties, when the mark stood at thirty-six thousand to the dollar: the world of early German films and Alfred Döblin's *Alexanderplatz*,



"Question five. A small sphere, at an altitude of 560 miles, is travelling at 18,000 m.p.h. Six months later another, much smaller, sphere sets off in pursuit..."

but illuminated by a spirit of delightful fantasy that is a new departure for this author. The narrator works for a firm of funeral monument makers and plays the organ in an insane asylum whose inmates include Pope Gregory VII, Henry IV, and a beautiful schizophrenic wearing a fur cape "worth at least ten or twenty memorial crosses of the best Swedish granite." But Watzek the horse-butcher already listens to Hitler on the radio, and predicts that "blood will flow. The guilty will pay..." The ending is poignant and ironical: the book obviously based on a measure of personal experience. William Colrus's gaily symbolical jacket deserves special mention, coming as a welcome relief from the spectral outlines and hideous dun-coloured designs that have, regrettably, become the fashion nowadays.

J. M-R.

AT THE OPERA

Der Ring des Nibelungen
(COVENT GARDEN)

THIS year's *Ring* (first cycle, at any rate) was not the entire and perfect chrysolite some have made it out to be. There is more than one view, there are scores, in fact, about the speeds at which the music should be taken, and I don't see why we should accept Rudolf Kempe's practice as the Tables of the Law in this matter.

The best that can be said of Herr Kempe's conducting (a good best, too) is that he brings yeast to Wagner's heavy orchestral mix. His *Ring* is aerated. This quality has its obverse in impatient tempi and some loss of bigness, of brooding majesty. Since we are clocked in for the longer pieces from six until after eleven (11.30 in the case of

Götterdämmerung) we may as well take our time over the grandeurs and get them in scale.

From general to particular. In *Rheingold* two crucial horn solos were crumpled. The lower brass writing in the prelude to Siegfried's forest glade became mud-pie. *Götterdämmerung* was persistently untidy. A wrong wind entry in the first act, soon after Siegfried had taken the love potion from Guttrune, partially derailed the score for a page or two. Some of the cow-horn stuff when Hagen whistled up his vassals was painfully out of tune.

Then the voices. Looking back, the residue of good singing (that is, firm, eloquently phrased, sensuous and intelligently felt singing) seems pretty small. It certainly includes Sylvia Fisher's Sieglinde. A few days before *Walküre* I had been listening to the 78r. records of this work made by Bruno Walter in the 'thirties. His Sieglinde was the matchless Lotte Lehmann. I don't say Miss Fisher is, in her different way, as good as Lehmann was; but she handsomely survives the comparison.

Commonly played as raucous popsies with silver-gilt voices and wigs, Freia and Guttrune were sung by a personable newcomer, Lisabeth Lindermeier, with a beauty of tone and phrasing worthy of the *lieder* platform. Maria von Ilosvay's singing of Waltraute's narration (*Götterdämmerung*) was of the same exalted sort,

a sort not to be encouraged in the opera house because it shows up the blatant shabbiness of so much that goes on there. Usually Miss von Ilosvay sings Fricka as well as Waltraute. Her Fricka is something to hug in the mind. This time the part is given to Georgine von Milinkovic, who makes a cold, flavourless dish of it. Miss von Ilosvay, absurdly demoted to Erda, lives in a square-cut hole in the ground and comes up now and then to tell Wotan about the state of the electric mains in a *tessitura* tailored for somebody else.

There is a new Brünnhilde, Birgit Nillson. Miss Nillson hasn't yet acquired the complete Brünnhilde kit. She deploys a wide range of high notes that are bright strong sunshine, but has little power or beauty of phrasing below. In *Götterdämmerung* she began to hoot a bit and, although her pitch is ordinarily secure, hit several sharp and a few flat notes. As to acting, she started out as a well-set-up blonde of amiable personality, mindful of the stage rules. By mid-*Götterdämmerung* she believed every word she was singing, spat contempt at Gunther and, for the spear-point oath, stormed upstage like a typhoon, almost cannoning Siegfried into the wings.

There is no occasion to detail the men's work. Vinay, Windgassen, Hotter, Witte, Klein, Kraus and Uhde were exactly as we have often seen and heard them. They gave us admirable pre-set performances,

predictable in every look and inflection a bar ahead. By this time the scenery and production, in part exasperating, are equally familiar. Here again I hold my peace but grind my teeth.

CHARLES REID

AT THE PLAY

Joyce Grenfell

(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)



JOYCE GRENFELL is back, and that is sufficient reason to wave our hats.

There are no dancers this time to lighten the load of solo entertainment; she's back in a straight programme of eighteen numbers, given pause to change from one lovely dress to another only by two piano interludes from her accompanist, William Blezard. All the words are her own, and nearly all the music is by Richard Addinsell. Bar four or five, the turns are new.

In the three years since we last saw her she seems to have gained in confidence and finish, so that where she was slightly, and in the best sense, amateur, she is now completely professional. This doesn't mean any falling into line with an accepted pattern, but rather the reverse; it shows most in the delicious ease of her informality, by which, coming back in a new frock, she can murmur "Makes a change," exactly as she might in her own drawing-room. It shows in the expert management of her opening, where she parodies the beginnings we are used to on the different levels of the theatre. And it shows in the quiet authority with which she commands the stage, whether for nonsense or for something verging gently towards sentiment.

This technical improvement, which includes her voice, makes us a little more critical of her material, and a little more conscious of her limitations. One cannot say that any of her turns are weak, but some are a good deal weaker than others; and taken in quick succession, as they are here, one begins to notice that emotionally they are all keyed to good manners, that there isn't much contrast, and that her satire, though up to a point deadly, stops short where it might hurt. She can stick in a pin with frightening accuracy, but she is too kind not to pull it out again very quickly.

But if for these reasons over a whole evening one bit of the Grenfell country begins to look rather like another, what rich country it is in itself, and what a variety of unsuspecting ladies are slid under her humane microscope. For she is uncanny in isolating the tiny differences in social behaviour that make up the whole difference; an inflection here, a way of standing there, unnamable small things that, once pointed out to us, we know to be exactly right.

Shirley returns, for a splendid account of being stuck in the giant wheel with an uncommunicative teddy-boy ("I like a nice little scream, when it's for pleasure!"). An American chain-store



JOYCE GRENFELL

girl describes the dangers of psychological salesmanship. An earnest songstress passes on the joys of oratorio, a teacher in an uninhibited nursery school makes gallant attempts to receive a visitor, a restless Knightsbridge hostess gives tea and interrupted sympathy to a friend. All this is minutely observed, and at its best very funny. There is only one excursion into the pathetic, a mother saying good-bye to her emigrating family; it comes off, but one feels that Miss Grenfell is happiest in lighter vein.

She is original, and witty, and a precision worker. And high among the pleasures she has to give us is her own gaiety and unflagging sense of enjoyment.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Woman in a Dressing Gown
The Bridge on the River Kwai

IT is only when one sees something as intelligent, as humane, as perceptively written and acted and as crisply, freshly, economically told—in a word, as good—as *Woman in a Dressing Gown* (Director: J. Lee-Thompson) that one realizes how easy it is to lose, little by little and week by week, one's sense of proportion. "Is it good?" someone asks about some new epic, and one says Yes, very good, or even Yes, excellent; and then something like this comes along and one has no adjectives strong enough, unless one wants to use some such word as "stupendous" or "terrific," and they have been (in this sort of connection) so debased over the years that people would only laugh.

Moreover they imply something like that other facetious word I have just used, "epic"; and here is no more, in essentials, than a simple domestic piece about ordinary people. But how incomparably deeper, more full of character, less artificial, more convincing and more worth doing than—for instance—another of which I had had high hopes this week, *Tea and Sympathy*!

For one thing this is a real film, using with confident ease all the resources and devices of the ordinary black-and-white screen to show how unnecessary colour and CinemaScope can be. The scene of the story, and indeed the story itself, qualify for dismissal as "drab" by those who avoid everything but colour musicals; and yet—impossible as it may be to convince them of this—the imaginative sympathy and the skill in the manipulation of sights and sounds with which it is presented make it fascinating.

The woman in a dressing gown is the slovenly, not very bright wife (Yvonne Mitchell) of a man (Anthony Quayle) to whom she has been married for twenty years. They live with their son (Andrew Ray) in a block of cheap flats in London. The film opens on a Sunday morning: we see them making their preparations for the day, and in five minutes, as she sews on his shirt-button while he bolts



(*Woman in a Dressing Gown*)

Brian—ANDREW RAY

Amy—YVONNE MITCHELL

Jim—ANTHONY QUAYLE

the burnt breakfast, we know the whole pattern of their makeshift life, and who is responsible. These are the conditions from which the husband has been escaping in a love affair with a young secretary at his office, and this is the situation that drives him to ask for a divorce.

The painfully pathetic devices by which the wife tries to keep him, and the way things work out so that he cannot bring himself to leave her after all, make the story; and it is brilliantly told (script: Ted Willis). I don't understand the people who object to the director's style. It is cinematically interesting, as it should be: almost every shot is designed, in fact, for the cinema's unique language in which composition within the frame, movement of that composition, sound, music (or silence) and juxtaposition with other shots, as well as the plain sense of the words or action, combine to convey an impression. This is what keeps one actively watching apart from merely realizing "what happened then."

Add the excellence of the acting—Miss Mitchell's is really a wonderful performance—and you have a film to be proud of. I have seen it twice with pleasure, and I could see it again now.

Another fine British one on a scale immensely bigger is *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (Director: David Lean). I have left little room for it, but few of you can be unaware of its merits by this time.

A magnificent spectacular war story set in Siam in 1943, this is dominated by Alec Guinness in the character of Colonel Nicholson, the narrow, punctilious, fanatically brave commanding officer of a tattered battalion of prisoners

of war labouring on the "death railway." Almost the only fault here is that the piece consists really of three separate stories, though the bridge of the title and the part played by William Holden connect them. The first part is the clash between the Colonel and the Japanese commandant about the use of officers in the building of the bridge, the second concentrates on a Commando outfit (Major Jack Hawkins) whose job is to blow it up, and the third shows the Colonel in effect fighting his own side, because of his pride in the work his men have done and his determination to preserve it. The climax develops hypnotic suspense, and the moral—that war is "madness"—is unexceptionable. This also in its way is first-rate; but considering its enormously greater resources, one could complain bitterly if it weren't.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Tea and Sympathy, as I implied above, I found a great disappointment: not particularly because of the weakening of the play's theme, which everyone has pointed out, but because it seemed slow, stacy and contrived. But there's plenty of variously entertaining stuff in London: *The Witches of Salem* (11/9/57), the last day or so of *Grand Rue* (2/10/57), *A Hatful of Rain* (2/10/57), *A King in New York* (25/9/57), *Oh! for a Man* (9/10/57), *Lucky Jim* (9/10/57), and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57).

Among the releases are the very gay and enjoyable *The Prince and the Showgirl* (10/7/57), and *Man of a Thousand Faces* (4/9/57), with James Cagney as Lon Chaney. RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Homework Three

I MENTIONED an amusing sound-radio chat between Gilbert Harding and Dame Edith Sitwell, and my bar-parlour acquaintance said "Oh, I missed that! When was it on? Which programme?" I told him that he was scamping his reading of *Radio Times*. "You have to grope in an organized manner," I said. "First remove the pull-out supplement together with its quota of advertisements, then wet your thumbs and try to locate the section dealing with sound broadcasting. Next, turn to the particular day that happens to fit in with your assessment of the state of the hebdomadal cycle, decide whether the time is morning-and-afternoon or evening, and Bob's your uncle."

"When I do that," my friend said, "I invariably find, after an interval of puzzled listening, that I've been consulting last week's *Radio Times*. But you didn't say which programme old Gilbert and Dame Edith were on."

"Ah, I'm sorry—Network Three. You'll find it, on certain evenings in the week, just to the left of the Third as you go in, or to the right of the Home. You can easily miss it, so grope carefully. It's in larger type than "From the Continent" and "In Other Home Services," and has slightly more panache about it . . ."

My first point then, this week, is that *Radio Times* in its present style and format is an obstacle to intelligent listening and viewing. The B.B.C.'s five services for each day are scattered over six pages of the paper; information about the various items may appear anywhere—



GILBERT HARDING

DAME EDITH SITWELL

"See top of page," "Eileen McFlint writes on page 63," etc.; repeats and re-broadcasts are indicated in obscure and inconsiderable italics; and the general impression conveyed by these schedules is of untidiness, dullness and take-it-or-leave-it patronage.

Must we for ever put up with time-tables that look like old music-hall posters? Readers of this column often send me overseas radio publications that seem crystal clear by comparison.

My second point is that Network Three has made a pretty good start. We night-school types have had a go at Spanish, the history of Anglo-Saxon England, current affairs, fishing, pigeon-flying and musical appreciation, and we have brushed up our French and our jazz. Network Three will be criticized, I am sure, because its contents are so heterogeneous, because it oscillates broadly across the conventional class-structure of education and entertainment. But the

programme is designed specifically for minorities and can therefore be excused its rag-bag appearance.

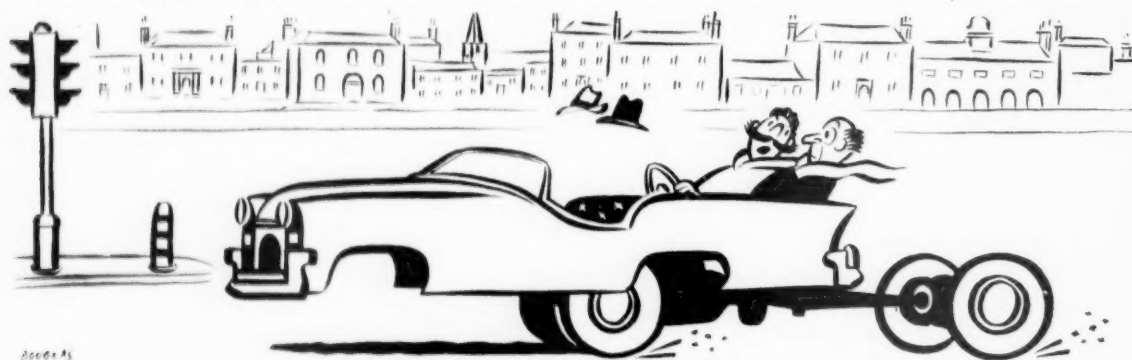
As the leaves turn, B.B.C. television turns too, and back come the programmes reputed to earn good ratings with the comptometers. "What's My Line?" is back in spite of all the fine talk about leaving quiz, parlour and panel games to the unlettered I.T.A. "This Is Your Life" is back in spite of the rumoured moratorium on stunts. Billy Cotton is back, "Dixon of Dock Green" is back, and back also are John Pertwee, "Off the Record," "It's Magic" and "Whack-O!"

I am enthusiastic about only two of the new regulars. "Hancock's Half-Hour," written by Alan Simpson and Ray Galton, seems quite the

funniest of the current crop of comedy shows. Hancock is well served by his script-writers, who have a brilliant line in literary cliché and the humour of goon-beam lunacy, and by a strong supporting cast led by Sidney James. I hope they can all—Duncan Wood included—keep up the good work.

"Hall of Fame," a crib of Jack Solomons' series on another channel, is a first-rate product of the B.B.C. Sports-view Unit, Paul Fox, Ronnie Noble and Raymond Glendenning. It looks back, whenever the film libraries permit, to the sporting heroes of yesteryear and their exploits. It sets the scene chronometrically by feeding the viewer snippets of old celluloid—the hunger marchers, Roosevelt's first-term election, Hitler *passant regardant*, and so on, and it brings us up-to-date by showing our heroes (Farr, Dean, Louis and Co.) in the living flesh.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



"...and a revolutionary new braking system."

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